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INIDIA TODAY 1991 Sep-Oct

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INDIA

SEPTEMBER 15, 1991

A TOP OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPER

THE COMPLETE NEWSMAGAZINE

Protester kicks the toppled statue of Felix Dzherzhinsky, founder, KGB



SOVIET UNION

END OF ANEMPIRE

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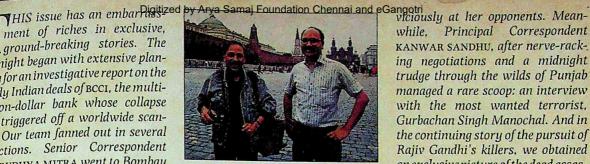
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ment of riches in exclusive, ground-breaking stories. The fortnight began with extensive planning for an investigative report on the shady Indian deals of BCCI, the multibillion-dollar bank whose collapse has triggered off a worldwide scandal. Our team fanned out in several directions. Senior Correspondent ANIRUDHYA MITRA went to Bombay to dig out details from tight-lipped bankers and government sleuths.

Another Senior Correspondent RAHUL PATHAK pursued officials and sources in New Delhi, Moradabad and Lucknow. Features Editor SHEKHAR GUPTA dashed off to Pakistan to meet founder Agha Hasan Abedi while Senior Associate Editor ARUN CHACKO flew to Luxembourg and London. New York Correspondent AMRIT KAKARIA tracked down Fairfax detective Michael Hershman, Then. events in the Soviet Union exploded. Covering the momentous international implications, especially for India, was a formidable compulsion. Gupta, who had done a cover story on the Soviet Union in the February 15, 1990 issue, flew to Moscow with Photo Editor BHAWAN SINGH. He had already managed an interview with Abedi and with Benazir Bhutto, who broke her reserve to lash out



Singh and Gupta in Moscow

Principal Correspondent KANWAR SANDHU, after nerve-racking negotiations and a midnight trudge through the wilds of Punjab managed a rare scoop: an interview with the most wanted terrorist, Gurbachan Singh Manochal. And in the continuing story of the pursuit of Rajiv Gandhi's killers, we obtained an exclusive picture of the dead assassins as they were first found by the police, and details on how the attempt

to take them alive was bungled. In sports we persuaded chess star Viswanathan Anand to write his account of his tension-filled match with Anatoly Karpov. Gupta is staying on in the USSR to report on the dizzying developments that are changing the world. Says he: "There is a mood of catharsis, as if the country is being liberated from foreign occupation.'

We hope the readers will feel the same sense of excitement and adventure that we experienced in putting this issue together.

IN FOCUS THIS FORTNIGHT



End of an Empire

Cataclysmic change has convulsed the Soviet Union. And as Yeltsin seizes centrestage, it is clear that the superpower's days as a communist monolith are over.

COVER STORIES.....70



Murky Indian Deals

The multibillion-dollar banking enterprise which has exploded into the hottest scandal across continents had shady operations in India. A detailed investigation.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION



A Fabulous Treasure

Buried in over 50 boxes in Junagadh is the treasure of four rulers of Kathiawar. Worth crores, it has not seen light of day for nearly 50 years. INDIA TODAY'S exclusive report.

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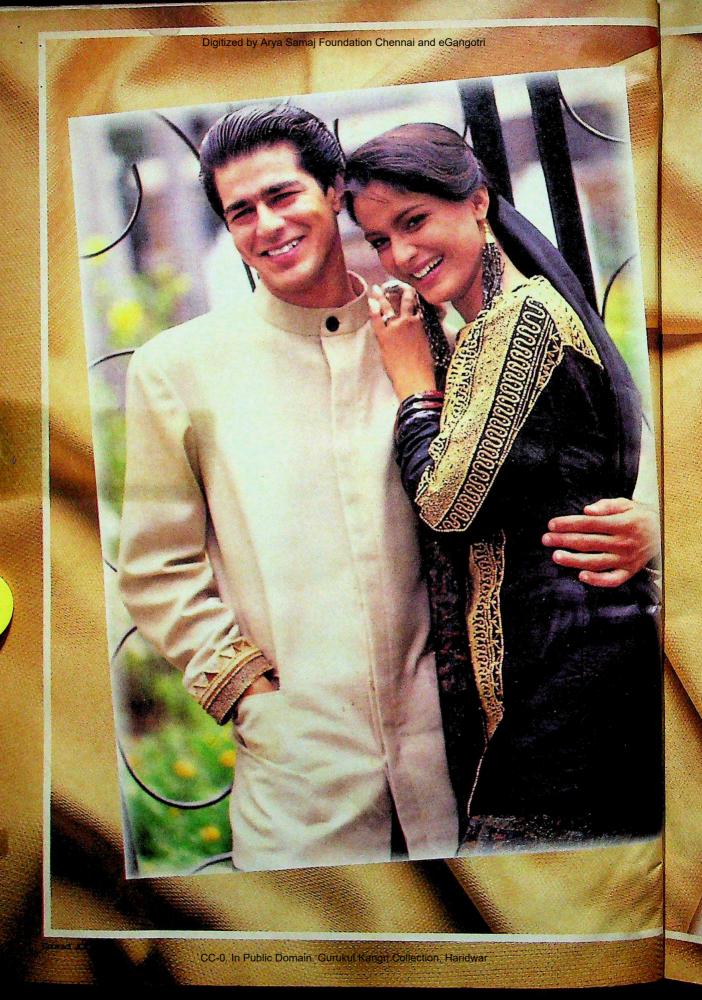
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ANNOUNCEMENT

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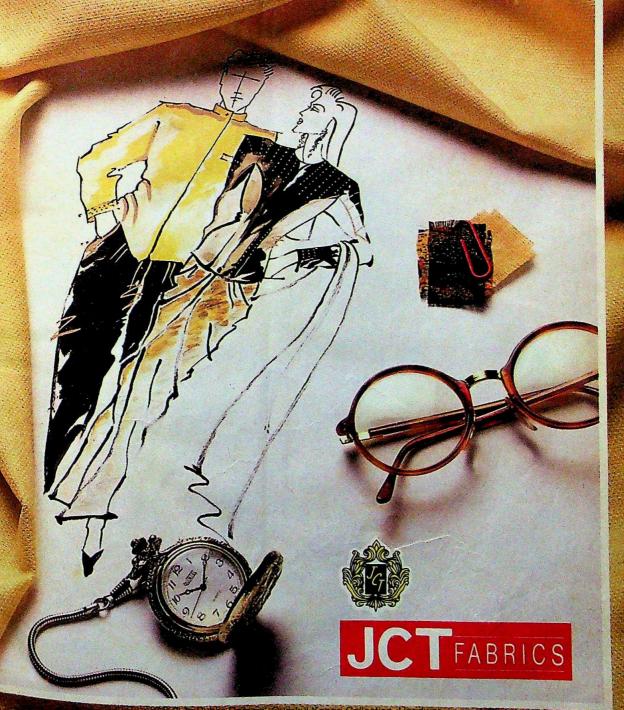
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PEDDLING POWER

Influence-peddlers within the Congress(I) are determined to draw Sonia into the fold of active power politics ("The Sonia Factor", August 31). The inhibiting factor seems to be her obligation to her children. Yet she must be well aware of the fact that having lived in a high-security cordon for much of her life, it will be difficult for her and her family to live ordinarily.

Kanpur

RAAJ GOPAL MEHROTRA

FALSE STATEMENT

Balraj Puri has been quoted in Crossfire ("Wages of Manipulation", August 31) as saying: "Jagmohan, then governor, told me that if Kashmiri identity was not demolished, India's identity would be threatened." This statement is wholly concocted and defamatory. I am sorry to note that you have published the imputations without verifying the facts from me and without asking Puri where and when the alleged statements were made. When Shekhar Gupta asked me to attend the discussion. I told him that I was unable to avail of his invitation because I would not like to make any assertion without supporting it with concrete evidence.

New Delhi

JAGMOHAN, former governor, J&K

FORGOTTEN FACTOR

The comprehensive analysis of the budget and the industrial policy ("Ending the Licence Raj", August 15) made interesting reading. However it omitted any mention of the country's highest net foreign exchange earner-tourism, which could well be the valiant saviour of our economy. Bombay PRADIP MADHAVJI

■ The new economic policy endeavours to pick out a child from the toddlers' pool and throw him into the deep end. Everyone has to fight to survive. Many would drown but a larger number should come up winners, ready to take on the world on their own terms. New Delhi KRISHAN KALRA

COLOSSAL COST

An important point that emerges from your article ("Reshuffling the Raj", August 15) is that a hefty 10 per cent of the budget is spent on the Central Government's personnel costs alone. If we add the expenses of the state governments, we would probably be spending more than one-third of the budget just on government administration.

K.K. SARUP

It has been stated that the Railway Ministry can be wound up after the



The stars of the Ramayana now have a chance to act in Parliament. But they shouldn't try to take the country back to the age of Ram.

Jamnagar

L. SRINIVASAN

P.V. Narasimha Rao's policies have to be implemented and respected since he is steering the nation. He is as good a leader as any experienced politician.

Madras

K.V. RAJAGOPALAN

VOLUME XVI NUMBER 17: FOR THE FORTNIGHT SEPTEMBER 1-15, 1991

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railways are converted into companies. Even if they are privatised, the need for the ministry will still remain, though its strength may go down substantially. While it may be merged into the Transport Ministry, any inference that the entire ministry will have to be disbanded is completely unwarranted.

Lucknow

PRAKASH GUPTA

SUSPICIOUS STORY

How Shanmugam escaped from the sır's custody ("A Dubious Twist", August 15) is very astonishing. The incident needs thorough investigation so as to establish whether it was really suicide or a planned murder.

Ludhiana

SUNIL CHOPRA

■ What was considered a prize catch, overnight became a demoralising factor, thanks to the inefficient security set-up. Shanmugam's death has only taken the STT two steps backwards.

Secunderabad

S. RAGHAVAN

■ The modus operandi of our intelligence agencies is wrong. That is why a major accomplice, Shanmugam, was able to flee from the srr's hands.

AMITABH CHANDRA

RETREATING INTO A SHELL

It seems the Indian communists ("A Clandestine Affair", August 15) will never come out of their shell, even when communism elsewhere is changing with the times.

Tiruchy

P. SUNDARARAIAN

■ It was appalling to go through obscenities like "solidly in bed" Let us not blemish our international image of being puritans in the use of the English language. Of late, it has been observed that your magazine has been indulging in too many Americanisms.

Bilaspur

P. RAVINDRA KUMAR

BRAVING THE ODDS

Jayalalitha is making a determined bid to break the LTTE-DK-DMK nexus in Tamil Nadu ("Tailing Tigers", August 15), and to put an end to the prevailing lawlessness and gun culture in the state. What is creditable is that she is doing this even though it entails a great personal risk to her life. Trichy V. CHITRA

PURPOSELESS PIECE

I was terribly disappointed with your feature on Sonia Gandhi ("In Limbo",

Digitized by August 15). While your correspondent managed to visit her by accompanying a delegation of politicians, what was he really able to achieve? It is a pity that the predicament of this poor woman steeped in personal tragedy has forced even a prestigious magazine like INDIA TODAY to stoop to get a non-story.

Calcutta

INDRANI CHOWDHURY

KERALA'S CLAIM

The map of the Cauvery basin ("River Rift", August 15) does not show any basin area in Kerala even though Kerala claims it contributes 147 TMC ft.

Bangalore

M.A. RADHAKRISHNA

PROMISE OF GOLD

What is the use of hoarding a commodity, which will result in no financial gain for the country ("Selling to Survive", August 15)? The argument, that the compound interest from selling gold will pay more in dividends than holding on to it, is correct.

Hajipur

MOHAMMAD ARSHAD

■ The magic of compound interest bonds is a myth. However the glitter of gold is a solid fact.

Ootacamund

K.V. KRISHNAN

SELFISH MOTIVE

The unilateral decision taken by the British authorities with regard to BCCI ("A Disastrous Dividend", August 15) seems to be out of concern to protect themselves. The authorities appear to be more interested in covering the tracks of high-level politicians. international governments as well as their intelligence agencies, rather than in storming of any temple, if it harboured militants. The Government was obligated to storm the Golden Temple.

Hyderabad

R. RAMISETTY



The Punjab tangle may be a Sikh problem but it is also a national concern. A solution is possible only through negotiation and the ballot, not through the bullet.

Patna Saheb

BALBIR S. BHASIN

Arya Samai Foundation Chennai and eGangotti catering to the needs of individuals from the catering to the needs of individuals from the Indian subcontinent who have invested their life savings in the bank. RAJIV HANDA

TERROR TACTICS

The article ("Held to Ransom", August 15) was commendable in assailing the Government's weak-kneed policy of appeasing terrorists for securing the release of kidnapped people. However, the ominous end warns the Government of those who may indulge in kidnapping, and then make an accompanying demand that all subjects in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case be set free. By giving this suggestion, you may have unwittingly put ideas into the heads of the LTTE.

Madras.

V.N. GOPAL

■ The repercussions of the blunders committed during V.P. Singh's regime are now being felt. Providing security to top political leaders and important officials is no solution. How long are we going to keep releasing these terrorists? And if we continue to do so, what is the point in arresting them in the first place?

Muzaffarpur

NEERAJ BHUSHAN

WISTFUL THINKING

It is inconceivable that 33 per cent of all VCRs, washing-machines and refrigerators sold in the country are bought by households earning up to Rs 25,000 per annum ("Business Briefs", August 15). It is well known that most businessmen declare only a fraction of their real earnings. Otherwise how can anyone with an income of Rs 2,000 per month even dream of acquiring such luxury items? New Delhi

K.S. KALRA-

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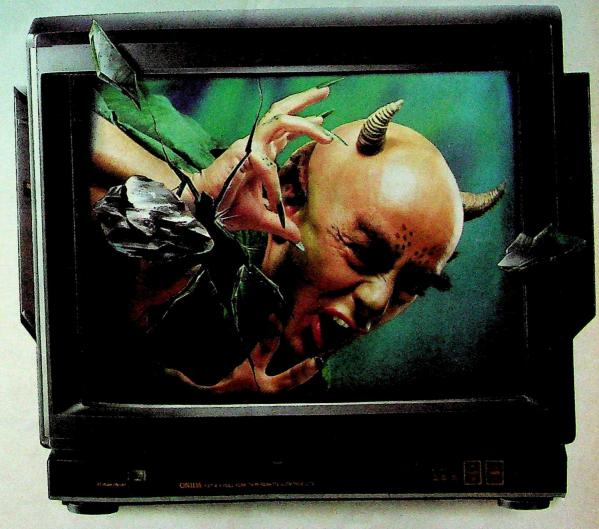
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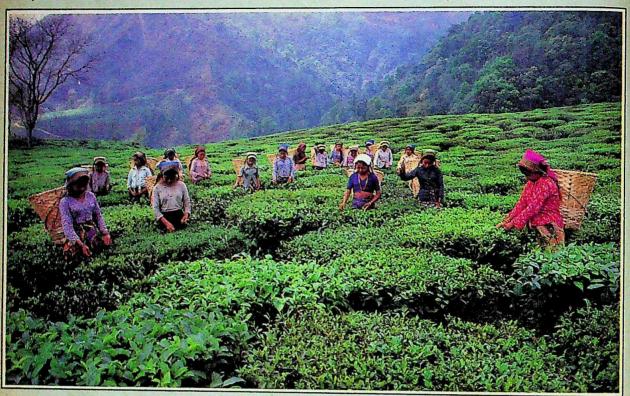
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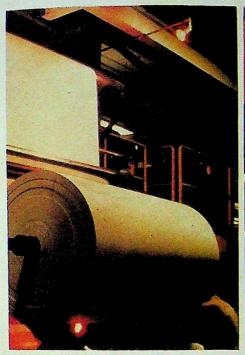


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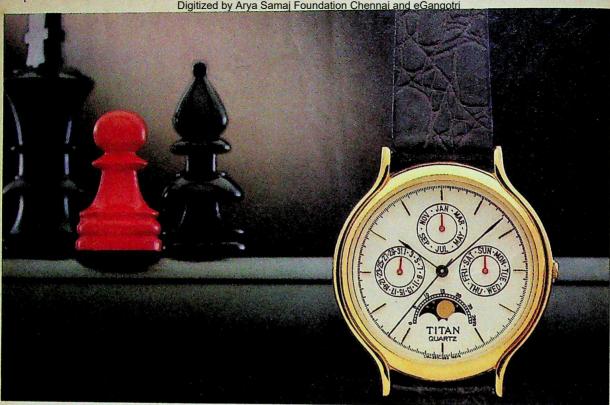
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More Jobs for More People

RIME Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and his crew of economic crusaders will have to come to grips with the most fundamental bread and butter issue confronting this nation: unemployment. There is no doubt that extensive employment generation is one of the unstated premises of the new economic policies.

But what the Government needs to enunciate in greater detail is a comprehensive long-term policy aimed at creating more jobs for more people. In the short run, as industrial, fiscal and monetary reforms are

enforced and businesses and public undertakings forced to compete or lose out, workers may face retrenchment. But the Government should demonstrate that following some initial pain there can be a period of accelerated employment.

It is revealing that while the growth of India's industrial output—at about 8 per cent—has matched that of Indonesia and Thailand, the corresponding increase in jobs in the industrial sector has been only 2 per cent, while Indonesia averaged 5 per cent and Thailand 7 per cent.

This is partly because India has had a policy of reservations under which certain items can only be produced by the "small" and "tiny" sectors which do not



create enough jobs, and partly because the industries with the highest employment generation potential-consumer goods, metals, machine tools-have been burdened by crippling tariffs.

Also, a network of cumbersome labour laws apply to industries according to the number of workers employed. In order to escape the regulations, employers deliberately keep employment low. On the flip side there are no laws governing 'go-slow" movements by workers or linking wages to productivity.

The current atmosphere mili-

tates against making businesses labour-friendly. The Government must remove tariff hurdles in the way of higher job-producing industries and rationalise labour legislation to create more flexibility for management.

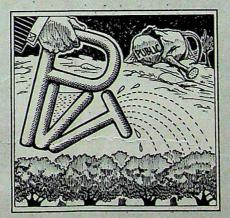
These steps must go hand-in-glove with an equally powerful push to create new jobs in the agricultural sector that still employs 65 per cent of the workforce. The acceleration of rural-based industries such as food-processing, animal husbandry, sericulture—with adequate incentives-would provide the necessary thrust in this direction. The reordering of policies and priorities to achieve higher employment has become an urgent necessity.

Pragmatic Afforestation

N his maiden speech to the nation after he became prime minis-Lter, Rajiv Gandhi spelled out what was then considered to be the most ambitious reforestation programme in the world—the greening of five million hectares of wastelands every year. During the celebration of Rajiv's birth anniversary last fortnight this special dream of his was scarcely mentioned. For discussion of it would have revealed a bitter truth: seven years later, the continuing assault on the environment destroys about a million hectares of good forest land each year.

This means that forest cover almost the size of Haryana will disappear every five years.

While officialdom claims that 22 per cent of the land is still "forested", the truth is that only 10 per cent is under good forest cover—the rest being degraded or denuded "forests". It was with the idea of reforesting these wastelands that the now defunct Wastelands Development Board was born in 1986. It died because it simply could not cut through the plethora of interlocking vested interests of departments and sub-departments at the state and district levelseach going its own way. The state forest development corporations created in 1976, even though they have failed



miserably in growing more trees. stand like a barrier in the path of any Centrally-coordinated afforestation schemes. Forest departments that control the bulk of degraded lands and wastelands-revenue lands, commons. panchayat lands-hang on to them like private property. The most basic questions-who will do the planting. where and what to plant-remain unanswered.

The need for fuel wood and fodder is about 133 million tonnes a year, the availability only 36 million tonnes. The obvious answer is to

plant more trees. But "social forestry" and "people's greening movements" are not the only answers. Reforestation requires technical knowledge of soil conditions, plant species, seed orchards, tree breeding institutes. The Environment Ministry has to think practically. While ensuring that the fuel wood needs of the poor are met, it must also throw open the wastelands to private industry and even foreign collaboration. Commercial plantation of fast growing trees by private investment has been a dramatic success the world over. In India, this will mean cutting through the thicket of the bureaucrat-forest contractor lobbies that have strangulated all efforts at reforestation.

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Health Hazards

• If recent remarks made by the Minister of State for Environment, Kamal Nath, are an indication, the corporate world's sunshine days, following recent liberal-



isation, may soon be tempered with dark clouds.

The minister proposes to dampen recent delicensing measures by forcing all industrial units to get environmental clearance. Although only 17 categories have been identified as heavy polluting units, plans are afoot to rope in the rest.

Furthermore, companies will have to recruit environment managers and file environment managers and file environmental audit reports, along with the burgeoning pile of documents, to the registrar of companies. Fiftymember environmental brigades in selected districts would apprehend violators. Offenders will be given a one-time incentive to confess violation or face trial in an environmental tribunal,

Nath justifies all this as necessary to prevent 'self-immolation of sorts'. To generate awareness, he has proposed a massive publicity drive with contests, films and slogans. So far so good! The only danger is of the Environment Ministry replacing Udyog Bhavan as the foun-

taininitide of burancia askulfduggery, to become the new bane of Indian industry.

A Foreign Hand

• For a party whose hall-marks are nationalism and xenophobia, the BJP has dropped a brick. Pankaj Chaudhary, its MP from Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh, is not an Indian citizen. And his Janata Dal rival Harsh Vardhan brought this to light. In fact, Vardhan has challenged the BJP candidate's election, with a petition to the President.

Vardhan appears to be on firm ground. A letter from the additional district officer of Kapilvastu district in Nepal states Chaudhary is a citizen of that country.

Chaudhary isn't taking things lying down and is confident he can refute the charges. Perhaps his best argument is that he belongs to



Akhand Bharat, the greater India of the BJP's dream.

tai Pigitized on Arya Sagnaj Foundation Chennai and e Gangori o

• The aging contingent of Congress Sewa Dal workers posted at 10, Janpath after Rajiv Gandhi lost power in 1989, suddenly find themselves on the street. For no



real fault of theirs.

Privacy-conscious Sonia Gandhi made them pack their bags for a very strange reason. Heavyweight cousin Arun Nehru, Rajiv's initial political guru, gained entrance into the fortress after Rajiv's assassination. Sonia was livid about 'that man' having found entry, which given his stature could hardly have gone unnoticed.

In the ensuing inquiry, the Delhi Police, also on security duty, blamed the Sewa Dal for the lapse. The Dal workers were quickly turfed out. And their attempts at protecting the new prime minister are also being blocked by the Special Protection Group. Obviously the halcyon days of the volun-

teer force, which did signal service during the freedom movement, are over.

Heroic Diligence

• Sunil Dutt, the actorturned-politician, seems to have turned his back on the glamour world of cinema. Or is it the other way around? Anyhow, he seems very conscientious about Parliament, arriving on time and staying until the House is adjourned.

But this was not always the case. Admittedly, there is a Congress(I) Parliamentary Party whip ordering members to attend the Lok Sabha every day till the session is over. But the third-term Congress(I) MP from northwest Bombay denies that is the only reason for him to do so. "My opponents blamed me for rarely attending sessions," he confessed. So he thought he would be ac-



tive in politics too.

Bollywood's loss may be Delhi's gain. But the thespian is not skipping social work commitments. During Lok Sabha holidays, Dutt flies to Bombay to supervise his drug de-addiction programme and the upgradation of cancer treatment facilities in various hospitals. Here's a politician with his heart in the right place.

TAIL PIECE

At a reception, US Ambassador William Clark Jr complained to S.B. Chavan about his implicating the US in Rajiv's assassination. The embarrassed home minister claimed: "It was a slip of the tongue."

"How," Clark was heard muttering, "could his tongue keep slipping for fifteen minutes?"

Designed. Sake

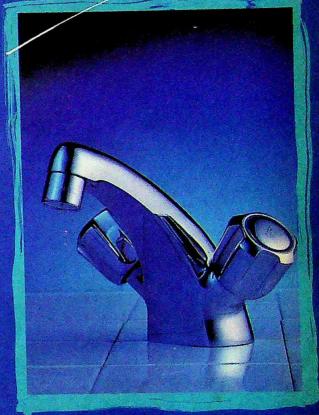


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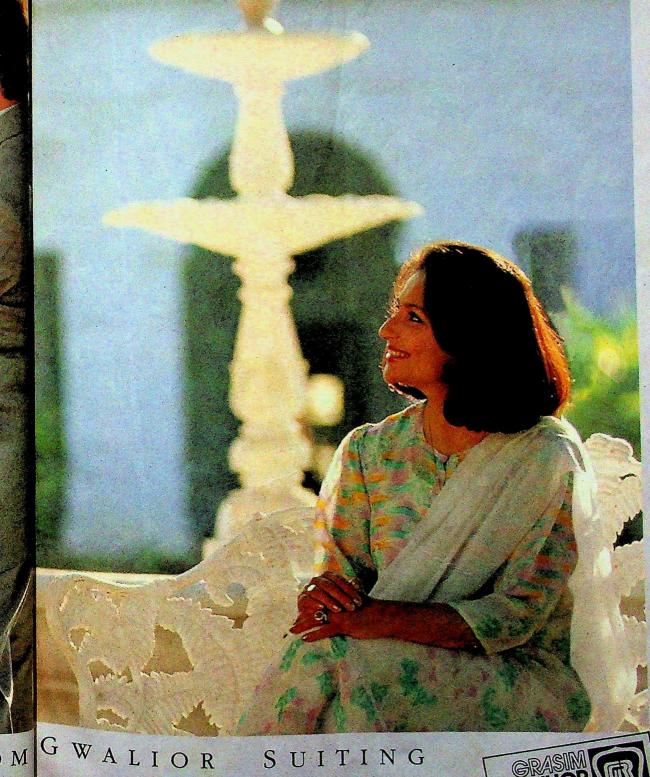
The designer craze is all over. From jeans to furniture. From cars to fittings. Everything seems to wear a designer label these days. But as we all know, fads have a finite life cycle. And over time, they tend to just fade away. Designer labels just vanish. In any case most 'designer' stuff is esoteric, yes. But practical? Usable? ## ARK we believe our products should not merely have cosmetic beauty. Which is why each one of our 250 products is designed to perfection. To last. To stand up to the rigours of time. And the demands of daily use. The ISI certification (where specified) and approval from the Bombay Municipal Corporation is testimony to our quality standards. And our commitment to products that last. By design.

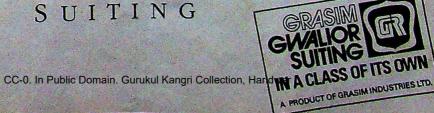


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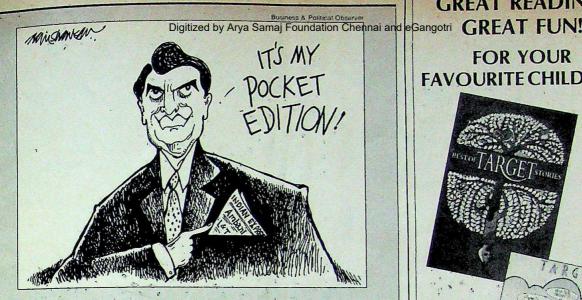
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• I am a simple worker of the party. It's the greatness of the democratic system, your blessings and my luck that I am addressing you today.

■ NARASIMHA RAO on Independence day

• If L.K. Advant reacts to this and thinks this cap fits the entire party, that's his problem. ■ MADHAVRAO SCINDIA

referring to his 'deshdrohi' statement in Parliament, in The Independent

• I don't need that tiny instrument (telephone) to do politics.

■ S. BANGARAPPA in The Telegraph

Our party is being run by a coterie of nondescript members.

■ AJIT SINGH in Sunday

 They (the BJP and Congress) have started walking step by step and let's see how far they march together.

> ■ V.P. SINGH on the Congress(I) support for the deputy speaker. in The Hindustan Times Magazine

- She is more than just serious. It is her magnificent obsession.
 - CHO RAMASWAMY on Jayalalitha's handling of the LITE in The Telegraph
- I am not very good at statistics. I am also a poor thinker.
 - MANMOHAN SINGH in The Sunday Times of India
- There is hypocrisy and no democracy in this country.
 - BAL THACKERAY in Probe India
- The Congress(I) functions as the 'principal political agent' of Indian colonialism.
 - SIDDHARTHA PHUKAN, central publicity secretary, ULFA in Surya India
- Sometimes the language in the Rajya Sabha is so foul that you want the chamber fumigated; expunction alone does not remove the stench.
 - RAJMOHAN GANDHI in The Hindustan Times
- I was always scared of awards.
 - K.V. SUBBANNA, winner of the Magsaysay Award, in The Week
- I am considered sexy even when I am covered from top to toe in six yards of a sari. ■ SHILPA SHIRODKAR in Cine Blitz

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BOOMTOWN RATS

 A brat pack descended on the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) headquarters last fortnight to track the city's rat pack. It was a newspaper report that led them there. The report said a job with the corporation was possible by trapping 65,000 rats within



/a Samaj Foundation Chennai and e Gangotin there was a drove of jobless youth who wound their way to the corporation, waving copies of the paper and desperately seeking employment. The BMC was also flooded with a melange of mail-over 10,000 applications, in fact, seeking sanction to embark on a Pied Piper-like enterprise. The

report had said the BMC would shell out Rs 25 a day for one dead rat, that a fleetfooted hunter could easily ensnare 25 furry creatures a day, and earn Rs 1,800 a month. But as the official rate for a rat is only 25 paise a day, it works out to a mere Rs 180 a month. Too nibbling an amount for any serious rat-catcher.

GERIATRIC GROOM

This could be a scene from a Hindi movie. An 18vear-old girl in Bendi, Bihar, getting married off to a man almost half a century older than her. Only nobody had bothered to tell her exactly how old her prospective husband was. Or how many ailments he suffered from. She only got to know thanks to a fortuitous glimpse of her aged suitor on the way to the wedding. And then she began to give vociferous vent to her feelings-she would prefer to be sacrificed at the Kali temple than marry a man so much her senior, she cried. But the groom's party knew it was on to a good thing. They



bound the truculent teen and then started tving her up in wedding knots. But bystanders sympathetic went into action, chasing away the brood of baratis. Then came a 26-year-old knight in shining kurta who stood up to save the day. And the rejected suitor was left to pick on someone his own size and age.

CHILD'S PLAY

Move over plastic toys. The real thing is here. And it doesn't just wind up and wobble but also hisses and rattles. A seven-month baby girl from Anand in Gujarat, looks forward to the end of her feed, because that's when she can start wrapping a rat snake



around her. And in this curious fetish, she's a chip off the old block. Her father has been the one to harness these serpentine tendencies in her. In fact, he has a minizoo to himself. Over the past 30 years, he has caught over 500 scaly snakes-including cobras, crates, and russel vipers. He has kept seven rat snakes in his two-

room quarters to keep the baby company. And he washes the pets with Dettol everyday so that even when his baby puts her favourite toy in her mouth- which she does ever so oftenthere's no real danger. There's obviously no accounting for tastes. One man's meat can be another man's pet poison.

GETTING HIS KICKS

And you thought policemen got their kicks only by beating up people. Well, one traffic policeman in Calcutta's stuffed-to-thegalis Lalbazar area doesn't. He believes in the old-fashioned school of punishment: making the victim do

sit-ups. A mini-bus driver. one of the city's rash road warriors, committed one of an endless list of infractions. Hoping to get away with it yet again, he was disappointed to find himself faceto-face with an eagle-eved traffic minder. When ordered to perform the unaccustomed exercise.



driver tried winning over his tormentor by whining. But the driver was forced to bow down, or rather sit up. With a full-fledged audience, some of whom were doubtless harassed bus passengers, applauding his misery. Here is one policeman who believes in sitting up for what he believes in.

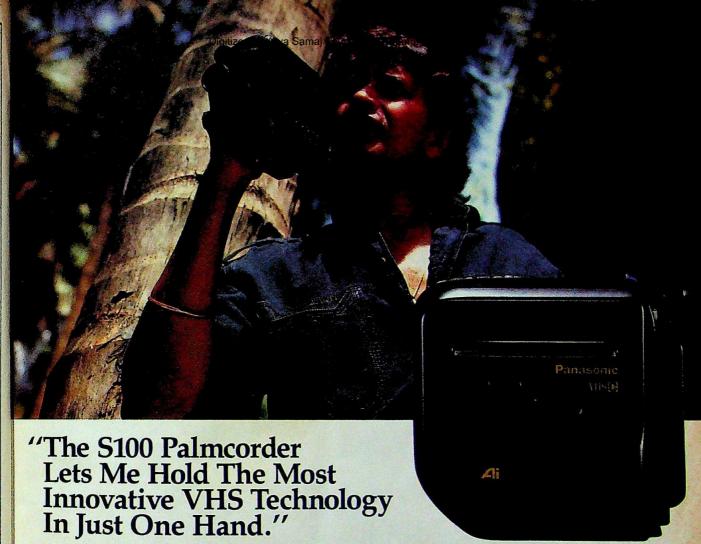
AWAITING JUSTICE

It was a case of mistaken identity. Tired of listening to libellous litigants, caretaker of Mahasamund court in Madhya Pradesh thought he would be giving justice a leg up when he locked in its temporary inmates. Only he



managed to clamp the doors on advocates as well as litigants. Involved in the longwinded byways of a particularly fractious case, both parties forgot that the court would be closing at 5 p.m. The caretaker locked up on the dot, giving the legal officials a taste of their own medicine when aid was

delayed. But only by halfan-hour. Wonder what would have happened if the men had been subjected to actual judicial slack. They would have probably been mummified. But what could be more appropriate for an Indian court than to be transformed into King Tut's tomb?



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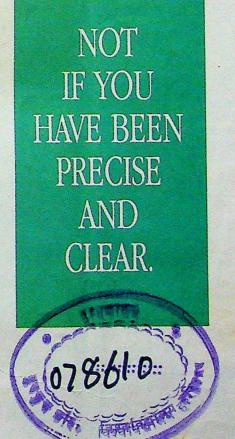
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Down to Business

With surprising resolve, in one month, the chief minister has cracked down on the LTTE, pushed major projects through and set a fast pace for the administration.

By KAVITHA SHETTY

VERYONE agreed she had charisma, but most doubted her consistency. Cynics and political rivals, in fact, predicted she would quickly self-destruct because of her unpredictable behaviour and inexperience. But Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha's first month in office has had most detractors eating their words. Zipping around the state surrounded by a bevy of bayonets. AK-47s, and commandos, tailed by astounding 1000-car cavalcades, Jayalalitha has swiftly got down to the business of government.

Her critics admit as much with awe. Says rival DMK leader and former revenue minister Nanjil K. Manoharan: "She is shrewd and capable. If she is more accommodating she can make a good chief minister." That is what Jayalalitha seems determined to become. She has made a deliberate attempt to show that she is no longer a haughty, sulking politician, and that she intends to take critical problems by their horns.

Her first step in this direction has been sprucing up law and order in the state. To prove she has an iron-coated determination, she has taken on the Tigers. Much of the elaborate LTTE network has been exposed or shattered, with the Government making its intentions clear by asking all Sri Lankan refugees to register with the police. Since only one-fourth of the estimated one lakh Sri Lankan Tamils have so far turned up at the police stations, the police have arrested about 3,000 of those who have evaded registration. Jayalalitha may even press for their deportation-a move which could add to her popularity and let the militants know who the new boss is. Says Congress(I)'s Jayanthi Natarajan:



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INTERVIEW

"I hate limelight"

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha was interviewed by KAVITHA

Q. How do you look back on your first month in office?

A. It has been hectic and actionpacked but a most rewarding, satisfying period. We have managed to convery clearly that this Government means business in every sphere.

Q. What are your priorities?

A. My priorities are listed in our manifesto. We are trying to translate election promises into concrete achievements. One of the main priorities is the restoration of law and order. Others are the provision of drinking water, electricity, the relaying of roads and rapid industrialisation of the state.

Q. You were expected to dispense those opposed to you in the past.

A. The Cabinet is a judicious mixture of experienced seniors and fresh young blood. I think I've put together a very good team.

Q. Why have you taken such a tough posture on Cauvery, considering the Central Government is an

A. Regardless of who's in power at the Centre, it's my duty to fight for the rights of the Cauvery delta farmers of Tamil Nadu. There's no question of pushing too far where our legitimate rights are concerned.

Q. You are accused of trying to widen the rift in the TNCC(1).

A. I have too many tasks on hand to even think of that. Why should I waste my time engaging in such tactics? I am not that kind of a politician.

Q. Is the alliance in danger?

A. Why ask me? Ask the

Congress(I).

Q. Is it true that you hardened your stance on the Cauvery issue after the Centre's tepid response to your request for financial assistance?

A. Are you implying that if I had got the financial assistance I asked for. would have sacrificed Tamil Nadu's share of Cauvery water in return? No way. The two questions are unrelated.

Q. Why have you put off the local bodies polls?

A. We have put them off because of the row over the Cauvery waters.

Q. What about the Sri Lankan Tamils in the State?

A. We have already enunciated our policy with regard to Sri Lankan Tam

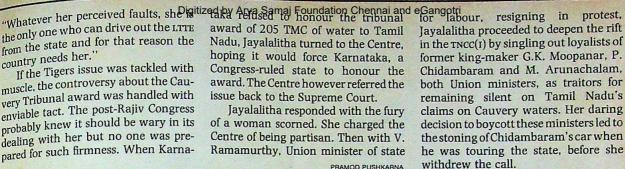
the only one who can drive out the LTTE from the state and for that reason the country needs her."

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If the Tigers issue was tackled with muscle, the controversy about the Cauvery Tribunal award was handled with enviable tact. The post-Rajiv Congress probably knew it should be wary in its dealing with her but no one was prepared for such firmness. When Karnaaward of 205 TMC of water to Tamil Nadu, Jayalalitha turned to the Centre, hoping it would force Karnataka, a Congress-ruled state to honour the award. The Centre however referred the issue back to the Supreme Court.

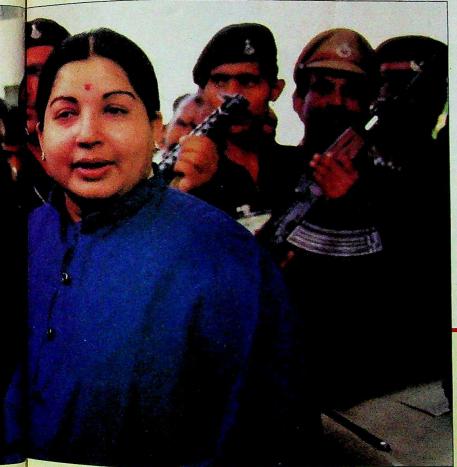
Jayalalitha responded with the fury of a woman scorned. She charged the Centre of being partisan. Then with V. Ramamurthy, Union minister of state

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA



Having riven the TNCC(1) and shown the Congress(I) who was boss, she turned her attention to administration. The industrial sector in which the former chief minister Karunanidhi had breathed new life was her first priority. Jayalalitha called a meeting of top industrialists soon after assuming power. For four hours during the conference, attended by top brass of the Tatas. Thapars, the Muthiahs, the Kotharis, Mafatlals, Sriram and TVS, she sat through listening to suggestions and making pertinent observations. Later, P. Obdul Reddy, president of the Hindustan Chamber of Commerce said she had "bowled us over". To drive home the point, L.K. Tripathy, industry secretary says: "One very important objective of the new government is rapid

> Javalalitha amid the security: tough talk



ils-refugees and the militants. The LTTE is just another terrorist group and we will deal with the menace as we would with any terrorist organisation.

Q. Having banned cheap liquor, what's next?

A. We aim to implement total prohibition—but it will be possible only in a phased manner.

Q. You said your's will not be a vindictive government. But you have proposed a commission of inquiry into the DMK government's misdeeds.

A. A number of irregularities committed by the DMK government have been brought to our notice and we are inquiring into them. We will decide on a course of action soon. But why do you

presume this is vindictive?

O. Though you have been in politics for nearly a decade, you are still new to your job. How do you cope?

A. You say I have been in politics for nearly a decade-and yet you say I am new to my job. Perhaps you are referring to the fact that I have not held a ministerial position earlier. I can cope with the demands of my new job quite easily. I take decisions after exhaustive discussions with my cabinet colleagues, and the secretaries and concerned officials of all departments. Having run a monolithic party like the AIADMK, being chief minister is relatively easier.

O. Why are you so insulated from

the press and the public?

A. I'm not insulated from the press or the public. Today terrorism is a fact of life. There's a need for seemingly excessive security regulations, and proper precautions have to be taken especially after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. I'm trying to be as accessible as possible.

O. Are you as autocratic and imperious as made out by the media?

A. The press has portrayed me as an enigma. It has labelled me "autocratic" and "imperious" and so onad nauseum. I do not demand servility from anyone. I am what I am-a simple person who hates the limelight.

Q. How do you take criticism? And how has it affected you?

A. Probably no other woman in public life has been subjected to so much mud-slinging. Criticism is too mild. I've been vilified and defamed, and the target of unjustified criticism. Despite attempts by the press to destroy me, the people have reposed their faith in me. They believe I'm a good, sincere person. That's enough for me.

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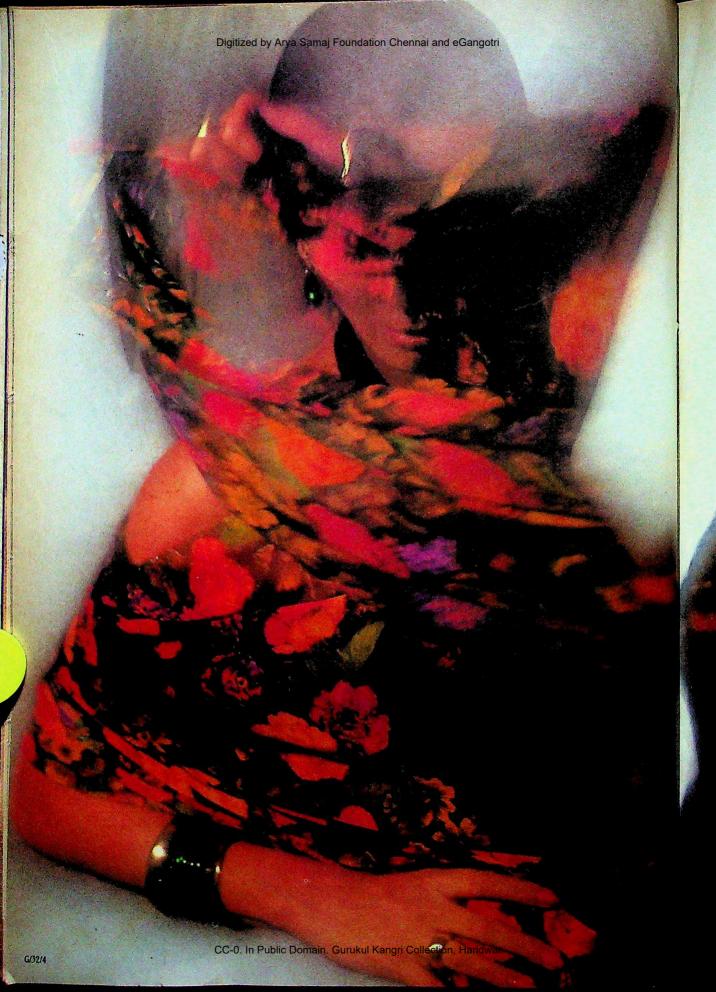
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gard the chief minister has done her homework.'

This was given the proof when soon after the chief minister cleared projects worth nearly Rs 200 crore; announced concessions including sales tax exemptions for big investors; increased the state's capital subsidy from Rs 15 lakh to Rs 25 lakh for investments between Rs 50 crore-Rs 100 crore and Rs 50 lakh for investments over Rs 100 crore.

As with MGR, populism will remain the hallmark of this AIADMK Government too. The chief minister's first order was abolishing the cheap liquor SHYAM TEKWANI

industrialisation and in that reDigitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotis determined to eradicate it."

THE CAPE

Sartorial Shield

Tadds to the mystery that cloaks her every action. Jayalalitha has capes to match every saree, every occasion. For her swearing-in it was purple, the colour of royalty, for official functions it's usually a somber brown. Blue and green capes, she prefers to wear on her campaign trail. She started wearing capes in mid-1990. In sultry Madras it is an impractical garment and triggered off speculation. The local press is convinced she wears it to cover her obesity. Others say it conceals a bullet-proof vest. Others dismiss it as a sartorial kink. The lady herself typically says: "I wear it because I like it."



Jayalalitha with leaders

scheme, launched by the DMK government. The implementation of this election promise is an effort to win the support of rural women, a block that cuts through all political and caste combinations. The state exchequer will be down by Rs 322 crore annually due to this. But Jayalalitha is determined to see this reform through. Village administrative officers and sub-inspectors have been made directly responsible for curbing illicit liquor distillation in their areas. At her first public meeting in her constituency Bargur, she categorically declared: "Even MGR had to relax prohibition because of the failure to control illicit distillation but my government **ADVISORS**

No Trust

AYALALITHA likes to show that she is lonely at the top and prefers it that way. She seems to have learnt from MGR not to trust anyone. Her controversial aide Natarajan is out at the moment though his wife Sasikala remains her closest confidante.

Her political advisor is Cho Ramaswamy, editor of Tughlaq, a childhood friend. For party matters she talks to her ministerial colleagues R.M. Veerappan, S.D. Somasundaram, K.A. Krishnaswamy, K.A. Sengottaiyan and S. Muthuswamy. Errand boy, fund collector, Sengottaiyan has always been a staunch Jayalalitha loyalist. Muthuswamy, transport minister for ten years under MGR describes himself as an "organiser, nothing more".

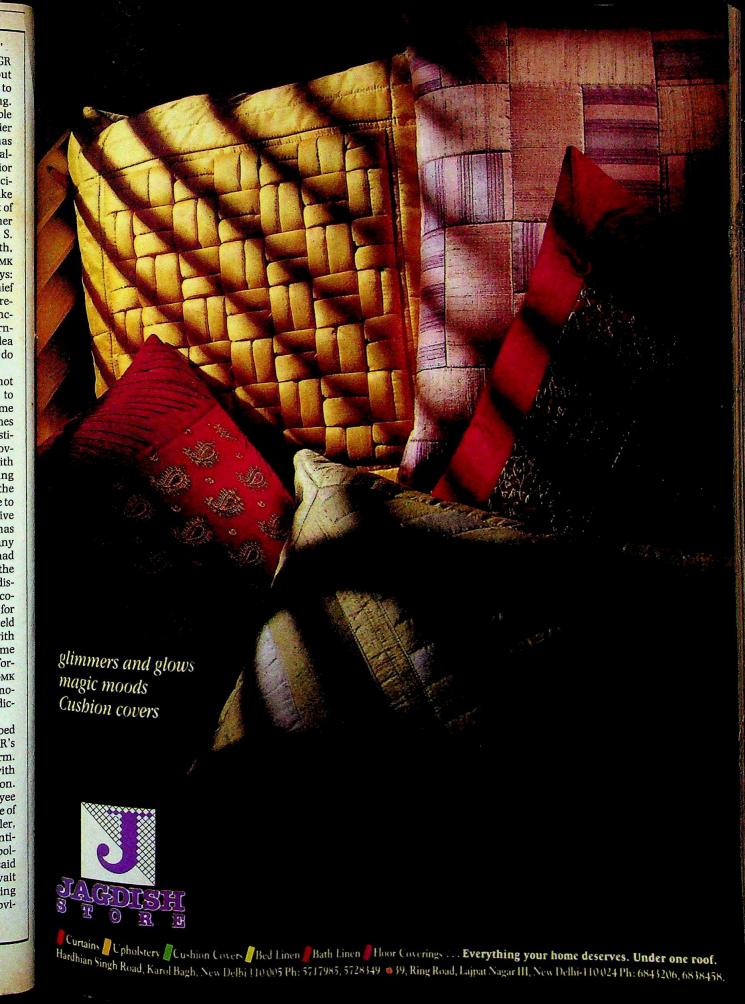
Wanting to outdo MGR might be a distant ambition but what is visible now is her effort to change her style of functioning. She does remain inaccessible what with the security barrier around her, but at least she has been refraining from issuing palace decrees. Says a senior AIADMK leader: "The final decision is hers. But she tries to take into account everyone's point of view." To critics who point to her inexperience in government, S. Muthusamy, minister of health, who has been in every AIADMK government since 1977 says: "She may not have been chief minister before but she has care-

fully watched the functioning of various governments and has a clear idea of what she wants to do and how to do it."

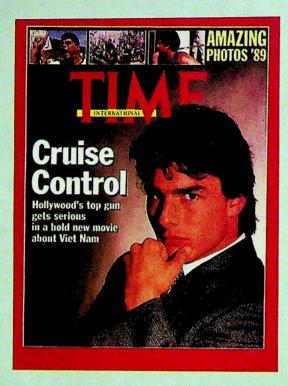
However that does not explain why she has to spend so much time changing the names given to districts and institutions by the DMK government, mostly with names that existed during the MGR era. Nor has the chief minister been able to suppress her vindictive tendencies. She hacked away at many welfare schemes that had been implemented by the DMK. She has also dissolved 27,000 primary cooperative societies for

which the DMK government held elections in accordance with guidelines issued by the Supreme Court. Charges Aladi Aruna, former AIADMK MP and now DMK spokesman: "She's undemocratic and totalitarian. Vindictive and highly partisan."

But Jayalalitha, who tip-toed into politics holding MGR's hands, has little cause for alarm. For clearly the people are with her in an overwhelming fashion. Arulavi, a corporation employee in Madras who was at the gate of the secretariat to see her ruler. epitomises the prevailing sentiment when she says: "She abolished cheap liquor, as she said she would, didn't she? Just wait and see, she'll make everything all right." Good beginnings obviously go a long way.



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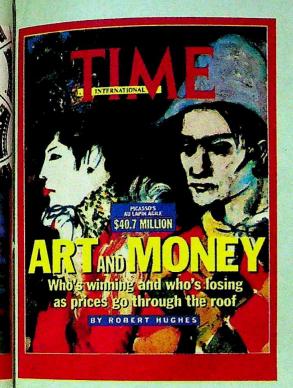
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A Fumbled **Finale**

By dithering, the policemen stalking Rajiv Gandhi's killers frittered away the initial advantage of surprise and lost an opportunity to capture Sivarasan alive.

By SARITHA RAI

7 ITH key conspirators Sivarasan and Shubha now just numbered corpses, the questions haunting everyone is: could they have been caught alive? Was Sivarasan, as always, just that shade too smart? Or did the sleuths slip on a banana peel when they were within shouting distance of Rajiv Gandhi's assassin? Was there a confusion of command: with the SIT, Bangalore Police, NSG, CBI and a whole host of others angling for national glory? Did the public spectacle created at the Konanakunte house, where the suspects were holed out, and the ensuing panic, have anything to do with Sivarasan eluding them for the last time?

The evidence available suggests that the phalanx of policemen bungled and through hesitation and half-heartedness destroyed whatever chance they had of catching Sivarasan and Shubha alive. That the police proved unequal to the situation is substantiated solidly by NSG Operational Commander, Captain A.K. Ravindran, who led the raid to capture Sivarasan.

Fresh from the August 17 Mandya raids, when five militants had been captured alive, Ravindran's team was asked to rush to the nearby Jayanagar police station at 8.30 p.m. on Sunday, August 18. He wanted to storm the Konanakunte house immediately, Says he: "I had five commandos with me and I said we should strike at 5 a.m. on Monday. We would have taken the militants by surprise. I was ready." He said as much to Bangalore Police Commissioner R. Ramalingam. But the green signal just did not arrive from Delhi.

According to him, it would have taken just 30 seconds to gain entry into the bungalow where Sivarasan staved put for 36 hours while his hunters fretted

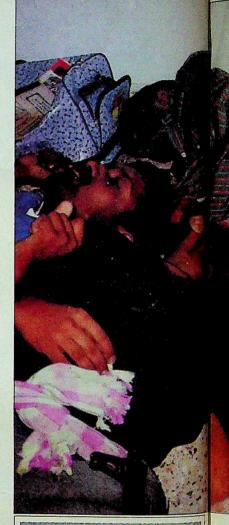
outside. If not Sivarasan, then at least two other militants could have been taken alive. But most of the police bosses arrayed around the hottest hide-out in the country were unnerved by Sivarasan's intercepted threats that he would take the lives of at least a dozen security men before committing suicide.

THE OPTIONS

When Ramalingam got wind of Sivarasan's whereabouts at 8 p.m. on Sunday, his initial reaction was to move in immediately. But once he spoke to Mridula—LTTE sympathiser Ranganath's wife who had tipped off the police about the Konanakunte hide-out-he began to develop cold feet. Ramalingam played safe and passed on the responsibility to the SIT and CBI.

Knowing that the militants were armed with just an AK-47 and a pistol, a sudden night ambush was the logical option. Between Sunday evening and early Monday, the militants were not aware of being watched. Says Ravindran: "Once the surprise element was lost, everything was lost." CRPF commandos, who are miffed at having been called in too late, had also suggested an operation on Monday night, on the pattern of their successful manoeuvres in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. The city police, however, shot down the proposal because their casualties could have been heavy.

Even as they waited for the NSG crack-force to arrive, the police did consider entering the house early on Monday, using one of four possible decoys: Muniyamma, the milkmaid; her brother Muniyappa, the house-broker; and the Ranganaths. They debated whether Muniyamma could be used to deliver drugged or poisoned milk to the militants. The idea was discarded: only one or two of the group would have been



"Once the surprise element was lost, everything was lost.'

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A.K. RAVINDRAN NSG Operational Commander

affected, putting the rest on guard. Using Muniyappa was also dispensed with. because the broker had not had direct contact with the militants. Then the police toyed with the idea of luring them out by sending in Mridula Ranganath Mridula was willing, but by the time the police decided to act it was too late.

WAS THERE A FAILURE OF COMMAND?

There was definitely a multiplicity of authority. According to Ravindran, il



would have been much smarter to have let the NSG handle the show singlehandedly. Instead, first Ramalingam passed the buck to the sir. The sir in turn insisted on contacting its chief, D.R. Karthikeyan, on the telephone. Karthikeyan initially agreed to an immediate raid, but 10 minutes later called to rescind the order. The reason: CBI chief Vijay Karan had refused permission, asking them to wait for additional NSG commandos and an effective antidote to cyanide. The SIT did have some antidotes with them but these were suspected to be past their expiry date. Frantic efforts were made to procure an antidote from Gwalior. Says a top city police officer: "Though we were dying to act, we just could not overrule all the top bosses."

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And when a log-laden lorry got stuck in a muddy patch just 50 metres from the hot-spot, the Tigers mistook it for a storming by the police. The lorry incident set off a shoot-out and all semblance of order crumbled. As wire-

THE LAST STOP Vindow Window BACKDOOR KITCHEN BEDROOM BODIES: 5 SIVARASAN 7 SUBHA MASTER BEDROOM STAIRCASE FROM BEDROOM TO TERRACE Window **RUNDOWN GARDEN** ENTRY GATE **CLOSED GATE**

Countdown

AUGUST 18, SUNDAY

6.15 a.m: Bangalore Commissioner of Police R. Ramalingam asks city police to act on scrap of saying "Anjanappa, Puttenhalli", found during Saturday's raids in Muthatti.

7.20 a.m: Anjanappa, a rich landlord, reveals to police he had gone to Muthatti hide-out two weeks earlier with LTTE sympathiser and his tenant Ranganath.

8.30 a.m: Police rush to Ranganath's house in Puttenahalli. Ranganath and his wife have left in a hurry.

10.30 a.m: Police arrest a tempo driver as he returns after dropping off the Ranganaths.

Noon to 4 p.m: A watch is ordered on a church where Ranganath's wife, Mridula, was dropped. Police nabs Mridula.

5.45 p.m: Mridula leads police to Konanakunte hide-out.

6.15 p.m: Seven sub-inspectors and KSRP platoon rush to spot.

8.15 p.m: Ramalingam decides that the city police should raid immediately, questions Mridula, changes his mind.

AUGUST 19

7 a.m: sırchief D.R. Karthikeyan arrives at Konanakunte. Gives

order to storm hide-out.

8 a.m: Puts police on hold.

8.30 a.m: Ranganath and LTTE activist Premkumar arrive at hide-out. Both nabbed. Crowd gathers as word spreads.

4.30 p.m: CBI chief Vijay Karan arrives from Delhi. 5.00 p.m: Night raid on hide-out planned.

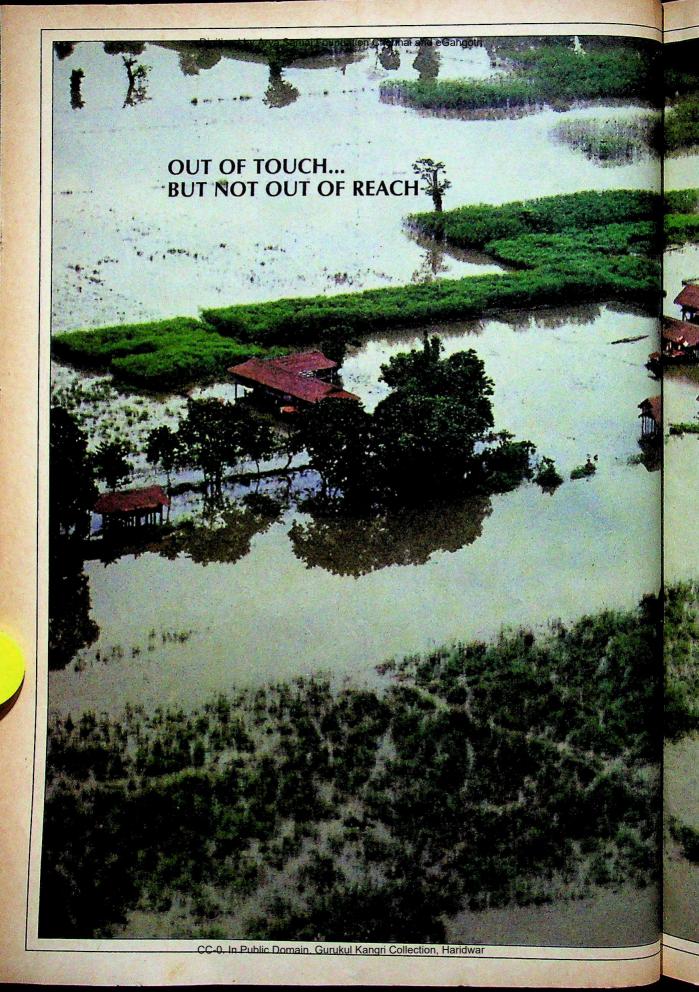
7.15 p.m: Shoot-out at Konanakunte. Utter panic among police top brass.

7.45 p.m: Blast heard from hide-out. Sivarasan shoots himself.

AUGUST 20.

5.15 a.m: Decision to storm hide-out at 6.30 a.m.

6.30 a.m. Strike. Too late. The Tigers are dead.





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crackled with news of the shoot-out, there was panic at the top. "Where's Captain Ravi?" Karthikeyan is said to have screamed into the wireless.

There was similar chaos at the site. Floodlights were switched on, ambulances arrived, fire engines whirred. the public address system was switched on and half of Bangalore's police force stood on alert. Yet their cover having been blown, the police did not strike instantly. Instead the top brass chose to sit out another long night waiting for NSG reinforcements to arrive with the antidote from Gwalior.

WAS THERE A DELAY?

At every stage, there was a painfully evident attempt to evade all blame. The police had 36 hours in which to hammer out a strategy to scoop up the suspects, but they reacted to a situation calling for lightning reflexes with the laborious tread of an archetypal bureaucrat. Waiting for Delhi to take all the decisions.

By the time senior officers got down to discussing the brasstacks of the storming operation, there had been a shoot-out. And when the house was stormed on Tuesday, after the five-and-a-halfhour flight from Gwalior carrying the NSG reinforcements and antidote, Sivarasan and Shubha were dead.

New Trail

S far as the sir is concerned, the work is just beginning. With the key suspects, Sivarasan and Shubha.

conforming to the LTTE credo of better dead than behind bars, the heat is off the sleuths, for now,

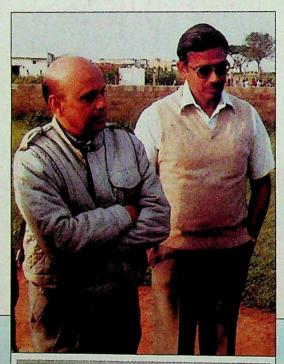
"This is just the beginning of unfolding the larger conspiracy in which many other characters are involved," says a senior sit member, for whom the deaths are not a setback. For, they say, the possibility of catching them alive was so slim as to be almost nil.

less sets in the Jayanagar police station Digitized by Arva Samai Foundation Chennal and eGaggotpolice should have surrounded the area, not the house."

POLICE PANIC?

Paradoxically, the police managed to both delay and panic. There was no attempt to retain even the appearance of a stealthy stakeout. Even when Ramalingam initially posted 20 plainclothesmen at a neighbour Murthy's house, to keep a watch on Sivarasan's hide-out, little attempt was made to maintain secrecy. Inevitably, speculation was sparked off in the neighbourhood with the incessant comings and goings. And then there was the flatfooted, panicky deployment around the house. As Ravindran says: "The

Karan (left) and Karthikeyan



The thrust now is to establish a link between Sivarasan and his foreign contacts.

The thrust of the renewed probe is to establish a link between the executioners and conspirators. The LTTE high command in Jaffna may not have been the only one pulling the strings. And Sivarasan may not have been the only marionette. Sivarasan's diary has revealed that one of his foreign contacts, Pushpraj, also an LTTE man, received a huge sum of money in a foreign bank last

Later, of course, the so-called cloak-and-dagger operation degenerated into a tamasha, with the public aiding the police in nabbing Premkumar and Ranganath. In fact. quite a crowd gathered around police-

men when they tried to administer saltwater to Premkumar, who had swallowed cyanide. As news spread. the police had to bring in three vanloads of reserves just to keep the milling crowd in control.

And when the lorry stalled on Monday evening, policemen and onlookers stepped in to help, causing complete commotion. Sivarasan used

> this opportunity to assess what he was up against. Hedid not fire just at the lorry but at random. When his gunfire was returned from all angles. Sivarasan may have realised he was cornered. That, surmise the police, may have been when he decided upon suicide. Twenty minutes later a loud blast was heard. The NSG thought then that it was a grenade explosion. But, it turns out, that it was actually Sivarasan shooting himself through the head.

> Karthikeyan says now: "The SIT was criticised for being too rash during the Indiranagar raids. So we decided to wait and do our best to catch Sivarasan alive." The best, unfortunately, was far from good enough.

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year. The sleuths are trying to trace the source of the pay-off. The involvement of two of Sivarasan's France-based cousins with Pushpraj has also been revealed. Sivarasan may have struck a deal with some foreign agency through Pushpraj. The

sleuths believe that his foreign contacts wanted Sivarasan to create a rift among LTTE ranks.

While the busting of LTTE hideouts has been left to the local police, the locus of the probe has shifted to New Delhi, where coordination with intelligence agencies strengthened to enable sit to pursue their remaining leads.

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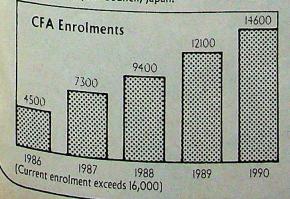
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Heartland Hustle

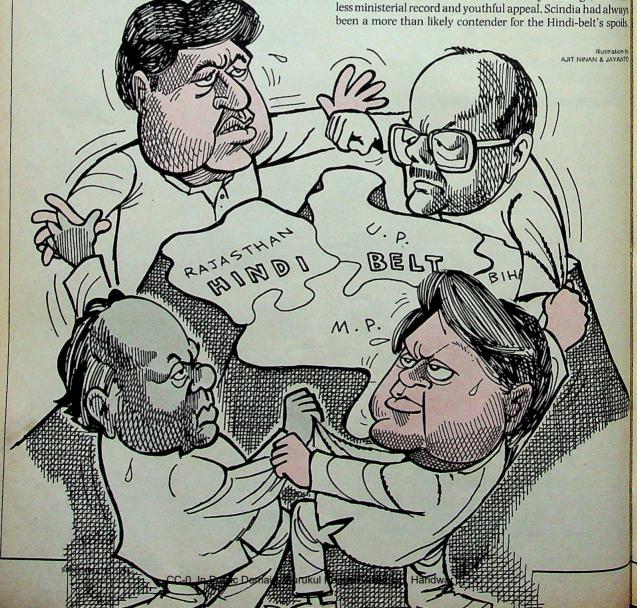
Party stalwarts Arjun Singh, Madhavrao Scindia, Rajesh Pilot and Sharad Pawar stake for the leadership of the Hindi heartland even as the Uttar Pradesh cupboard looks bare.

By ZAFAR AGHA

THE scramble for the Hindi heartland has begun. Four Congress(I) stalwarts-Arjun Singh, Sharad Pawar, Madhavrao Scindia and Rajesh Pilot-have entered the battle for the orphaned middle kingdom. With his muchpublicised remarks against the BJP last fortnight, Scindia appeared to have stolen a long march on his rivals.

The bankruptcy in the Congress(I) is so acute that many wanted to cash in immediately on Scindia's sharply-rising stock. By dubbing the BJP "desh-drohi" at a news conference in Lucknow, Scindia not only sent the affronted party

into a tizzy but also galvanised the Hindi-belt Congressmen into action. While the BJP cried foul and boycotted the Lor $Sabha for two \, days, the \, Congress (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, by \, this \, show \, congress \, (I) \, was \, enthused \, (I) \, was \, enth$ of defiance against its main adversary in the heartland Within no time at all, there appeared posters-not only in Bhopal but also in Lucknow and Delhi-lauding the civil aviation minister for having taken on the might of the BIR. Senior Congress(I) leaders like K.N. Singh, Mohsina Kidwal Jagannath Mishra, Shiv Charan Mathur, as well as many young MPs, made it a point to visit the minister at his parliamentary office and even his residence. For a while, even Sonia Gandhi took backseat to Scindia as he seemed ready to step into her husband's shoes. With his royal lineage, blemish-



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However Scindia's campaign was derailed all too soon. looking for someone to fill it.

When he voted for the BIP nominee in the election for deputy speaker, his newly-won followers felt none-too-happy. A spenior Congress(I) leader from Uttar Pradesh said in disgust: Scindia should have stuck to his guns and abstained from voting like so many other party MPs did." And the leaderless flock took up its desperate search once again.

But they got no help from Uttar Pradesh, once overflowing with prime ministerial potential, but now forced to scrounge around for a viable champion to head the entire heartland. Long used to basking in the glow of the Gandhis, no effort was

made to develop a second rank of leaders in the state. As senior state leader Sheila Dikshit admitted: "The Gandhis were too charismatic. Their presence made us complacent about the leadership issue." The failure shows. Former chief minister Narain Dutt Tiwari is cooling his heels in the US after having lost the Lok Sabha elections, though he won his assembly seat; state party chief Mahabir Prasad is under pressure from compatriots to step down owning "moral responsibility" for the Congress(I) poll debacle; others like Dikshit, K.N. Singh and Lokpati Tripathi are camping in the capital, awaiting the organisational elections in December. As for Bihar, with Laloo Prasad Yadav firmly entrenched there, no Congress(I) leader-not even Jagannath Mishraseems likely to emerge as a challenger.

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Illustration by

O the bid for the heartland is, for the first time, being mounted by men from outside Uttar Pradesh. Scindia's anti-BJP outbursts seem aimed at wooing the Muslim votebank, but as far as strategy is concerned, he could take a tip or two from Union Minister of State for Communications Rajesh Pilot. Pilot has been making his moves, but more cautiously, anxious as he is to avoid a hasty retreat like Scindia's. On August 19, two of his supporters, Aslam Sher Khan and Dilip Bhuria, invited former and present party MPs for a discussion. The agenda: "how to carry on the unfinished task of departed leaders like Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.'

The response was overwhelming. Over 250 former Congress(I) MPs and nearly 40 sitting MPs attended the daylong session at the Parliament House Annexe. As expected, most of them were from the Hindi belt. Among them were bigwigs like Mishra, Kidwai and Mathur, But as a leader from Rajasthan curtly pointed out: "Our attendance at the session does not necessarily mean we accept Pilot as our leader." The message, however, had been driven home. That Rajiv Gandhi's void is being felt and the party workers are

Both Scindia and Pilot seem to have accurately gauged the restlessness in the party. And they are both aiming to establish themselves in Uttar Pradesh. Scindia has got in touch with state party leaders like Union Minister of State for Mines Balram Singh Yadav, Barabanki MLA Surinder Singh Awasthi, and AICC(I) General Secretary Rajendra Kumari Bajpai's son, Ashok. He also plans to address public meetings in Muslimdominated areas of Moradabad, Badaun and Bareilly.

Pilot, on the other hand, plans to woo the traditional party vote-banks of farmers, minorities, Harijans and tribals. Fit-

tingly he is always accompanied at his meetings by Sher Khan, Bhuria and Ravi Maloo-a Muslim, a tribal and a Harijan. With Pilot being a backward, his symbolic catch-all coalition is complete. He too has his travel plans well laid out: he will be spending the next few weeks in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar as also Guiarat, Maharashtra and Kerala. His mediatory efforts for 10c Executive Director K. Doraiswamy's release as well as his contacts with Punjab militants are pointers to his ambitions for national stature. A fact his supporters testify to.

Even more measured in their moves are Union Minister for Human Resource Development Arjun Singh and Defence Minister Sharad Pawar. No public parleys or confrontations for them. But they are keeping alive their contacts with party MPs, especially those from Uttar Pradesh. They too plan to travel through these areas this month. Arjun Singh says he has a lot of invitations from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and will be visiting these areas. But he also points out, with characteristic caution: "The urge for leadership should not lead to one-upmanship in the party. There is a need for restraint and strengthening Narasimha Raoji's hand." And although Pawar is lying low after his abortive putsch in late June, there is evidence of cooperation between Pawar and Scindia in the Hindi belt, with former Youth Congress(I) president Anand Sharma acting as a go-between. Sharma, who has his feet planted in both camps was, in fact, present at Scindia's house when the BJP workers stormed it.

The one who finally emerges as the Congress(I) champion of the Hindi belt will enjoy the backing of 57 party MPs, not only from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan but also Harvana and Delhi, which look to the heartland to see which way the wind blows.

And the possibility of this leader being from the state that has given seven prime ministers to the country, seems remote.

THE CONTENDERS' STRATEGY

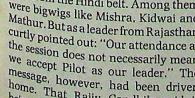
Arjun Singh Rally the old guard Madhavrao Scindia **Woo the Muslims Rajesh Pilot** Champion farmers' cause **Sharad Pawar** Use southern leverage

THE FALLEN LEADERS

Narayan Datt Tiwari Lack of mass base exposed Jagannath Mishra Beaten at his own game **Lokpati Tripathi** Failure of family magic Rajendra Kumari Bajpal Lost election and stature **Mahabir Prasad** Scapegoat for party debacle **Balram Singh Yadav** Featherweight OBC leader

PRIME MINISTERS FROM UTTAR PRADESH

Jawaharlal Nehru Unquestioned leader of party Lal Bahadur Shastri Man who filled the vold Indira Gandhi Charismatic leader Charan Singh Farmers' champion Rajiv Gandhi Upholder of modernity V.P. Singh Mandal messiah Chandra Shekhar Pragmatic, blunt and



short-lived

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Temple Trauma

As Hindu hardliners mount pressure, Ayodhya may well prove the rock on which state Chief Minister Kalyan Singh's fortunes flounder

By DILIP AWASTHI

HE BJP Government is caught between Scylla and Charybdis. And it has only the Ram Janmabhoomi issue to blame. If Chief Minister Kalyan

Singh, considered a hardliner himself, pushes ahead with the temple construction at the disputed site, he is bound to face unprecedented communal hysteria and a wrathful Centre. But if he continues to soft-pedal, hardliners within the party and the stormtroopers of VHP and Bairang Dal will upset his applecart. And it's the second scenario that is becoming the real threat for the twomonth-old Government.

For recent events have made it amply clear that the pro-temple elements are getting impatient with Kalyan Singh-who is seen as high on rhetoric but low on action-and have started trying to force his hand. The BIP hailed as a cohesive force isn't acting like one in the state. And the VHP has even set a new deadline for starting the temple construction.

. Nothing symbolises the new hawkish mood better than the attempt to have the barricades removed around the disputed shrine. Wanting to remind the BIP Governoccupied with large-scale transfers. about its poll promise. Vinay Katiyar, Faizabad MP and president of the state Bajrang Dal, told the press on July 31 that if the three-layered barricades were not dismantled by 10

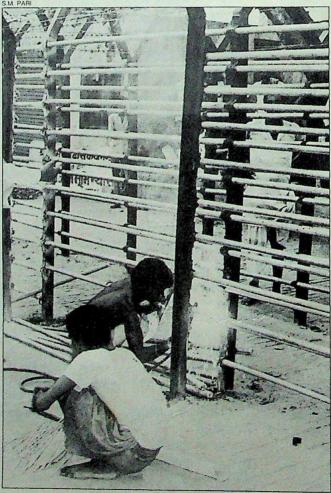
a.m. the next day, he would launch a dharna. Declared he: "I do not care whether the Government stays or goes, but the barricades have to go."

Startled, the Government buckled under, and decided to remove a part of

"I do not care whether the BJP Government stays or goes, but the barricades at the site have to go."

VINAY KATIYAR, BJP MP





Barricade around temple site being removed: buckling under

the barricades. So when Katiyar reached the spot alongwith a group of 250 religious heads and sants, the district machinery had swung into action. A gate now provides pilgrims a short-cut to approach the VHP's foundation from

the Janmabhoomi site. According to Mahant Ram Chandra Paramhans, president of Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas, they were assured that the remaining barricades too would be removed later.

Notwithstanding, Kalyan Singh pooh-poohs that he could be bullied into taking any administrative action. Says he: "The question pressurising me doesn't arise when I am myself committed to building the temple." However, the sants and mahants can be stubborn and unsparing. Says Mahant Nrit Gopal Das, vice-president of the Janmabhoomi Ram Mukti Samiti: "If they back out in the interim six-month period, the people of this country will once again assemble in Avodhya to start the temple construction.'

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He is referring to the two-day VHP conference in Ayodhya last month where it was indicated that they would go ahead with the construction plan any time during or after November. But the BJP state executive meeting in Etawah on August 23-24 while underplaying the temple issue denied that VHP had set a dead-Party President Murli Manohar Joshi said construction would begin as soon as the hurdles in the way of the temple were Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri



KALYAN SINGH

"Muslims will accept relocating of the mosque"

Kalyan Singh, known for his frontal attacks on the Mulayam Singh government on Ram Janmabhoomi, is increasingly coming under fire for not doing enough for the temple as chief minister. But spelling out his approach to Senior Correspondent DILIP AWASTHI, he was cool and composed. Excerpts:

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Q. What are your plans for the temple?

A. Constructing it at the existing Ram Janmabhoomi site. We want to end this dispute. Enough blood has already been shed.

Q. But won't it lead to communal hysteria once again?

A. No, it won't. It happened in the past because the rulers stalled a solution for petty political gains. But, Muslims understand that the matter relates to the faith of crores of Hindus. They will honour this faith. Also, we have made enough arrangements to prevent riots.

Q. Do you plan to demolish the mosque?

A. No, we do not propose to demolish it—only relocate. The thing is no power can ever remove the Lord Ram idols from the site. Then, why keep the structure of the mosque standing?

Q. But Muslims won't accept that solution.

A. They will accept it very soon. I've been holding talks with them to convince them.

Q: What are the main obstacles?

A. They are mainly legal. I believe courts can never rule on issues of faith. Besides whichever side remains aggrieved will always reject any court order.

Q. Will you withdraw the cases and take over the property?

A. You'll know this when the time comes.

Q. You scrapped the judicial commission set up by Mulayam Singh to probe kar seva killings.

A. We are constituting a comprehensive judicial commission that will leave no angle uncovered.

Q. Are the VHP and mahants getting impatient with your government?

A. Not at all, because I am keeping all of them posted on how I am proceeding.

Q. The barricade incident showed desperation.

A. It was a rightful demand. Some superfluous arrangements around the Janmabhoomi have been withdrawn. The entire barricades, however, will not be removed.

Q. Did vHP give you a deadline?

A. No. not at all. Their leaders said no such resolution was passed.

And what are those obstacles? The law suits pending in the high court is one, feel the mahants. They should be withdrawn and the property handed over to the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas. For Kalyan Singh it's more important to persuade Muslims to soften their stand. Says he: "I want Muslims too taking part in kar seva enthusiastically."

But he hasn't made much progress in bringing them to the negotiating table. He claims he has been holding talks with Muslim leaders but refuses to spell out their names. It's certain that so far no official meeting with the Muslim representatives has been fixed.

HE Babri Masjid Action Committee, which was meeting on August 25 to chalk out a strategy to protect the Babri mosque, too has lost hope of a negotiated settlement. Says Zafaryab Jilani, its convener: "Why talk with a government that has already decided to demolish the Babri mosque."

Their fears are not baseless. While Kalyan Singh insists the mosque will be only relocated, Mahant Das says: "There is no question of relocating the structure involved which is a temple."

More than the mahants, the restless rank-and-filers in his own party afraid of their electorate's ire could prove to be Kalyan Singh's nemesis. Says a senior party MP from Bundelkhand region: "Now people have started asking: where is the temple? If nothing happens soon, at least I am not going back to my constituency." According to insiders, about 15 of the 50 MPs and 80 of the 212 MLAs in the party owe their allegiance to the VHP-Bajrang Dal, or are RSS activists. So backing out seems to be more fraught with danger for Kalyan Singh than going ahead as softliners are not expected to be very vocal.

At the same time, his each move to win the hardline applause will be sought to be scuttled by the Congress(I) Government at the Centre. At the outset, BJP strategists had anticipated a showdown with the Centre in about two years' time. This they thought would do the party good in the next general election.

But the growing anxiety on all sides may not let Kalyan Singh pussyfoot for that long. A denouement, then, within a year does not sound like a bright prospect for the party. To sidestep that, Kalyan Singh has emphatically ruled out communal trouble stemming from his moves to settle the issue. But gaining the confidence of all the disputing factions may be impossible. Ayodhya may well prove to be his Waterloo.

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri GURBACHAN SINGH MANOCHAL

"We will not budge an inch"

HIS is the first-person account Principal Correspondent KANWAR SANDHU who managed to meet Gurbachan Singh Manochal. founder of the original Panthic Committee and chief of the Bhindranwale Tigers Force of Khalistan. Manochal is one of the troika of top militants who continues to evade the widening security dragnet.

It took a two-hour trudge along dusty

byways to meet him, but this was inevitable. For, in the militant folklore of Punjab, Manochal is a key figure. Along with Wassan Singh Zafarwal, chief of Commando Khalistan Force, and Sukhdev Singh Dassuwal, head of Babbar Khalsa International, he has been a shadowy figure, evading direct contact with the media for the past five years. An hour's drive from Goindwal in Amritsar district and half-an-hour of a spine-rattling tractor ride took us to the point from where we started our trek to meet Manochal, who carries a reward of Rs 20 lakh. Joined by three contacts, I set out on foot, armed with a small camera, tape recorder, torch and bludgeon.

"Don't answer if someone calls out and put on the torch only in case of an emergency." I was instructed. Walking along narrow lanes, we often slipped into paddy fields covered with ankle-deep water.

People operating tubewells offered help. mistaking us for militants. By the time we reached the designated farmhouse, my wet shoes were in my hand.

There were about 15 people in the house, squatting on cots in the courtyard. Manochal came an hour later, accompanied by three others carrying a virtual armoury. Baba, as Manochal is called, carried a . 38 mm pistol and assault rifle on his stocky frame. A one-time surveyor in the artillery division of the army, the 38year-old Manochal quit when he was sentenced to a 10-month imprisonment following an altercation. On at least seven occasions, he was almost ensnared by the

police. Contrary to police claims, he has been out of the country on only two occasions, once to Darra in North West Frontier province in Pakistan to buy weapons. His Punjabi is rustic, ornamented with quotes from Gurbani, and his answers candid, except on Pakistan's involvement. Like most Punjab militants, Manochal too appears to live in a makebelieve world. As far as giving in is

Photographs by KANWAR SANDHU

"We do get help from outside. Sometimes we have to buy weapons. At other times we get them on the basis of understandings."

> concerned, his answer sums up his iron resolve: "There is no going back now. My promise to the waheguru is that I will never be caught alive." Some excerpts from the interview.

Q. What exactly is the aim of this 'struggle' that you are engaged in?

A. The goal is simple. We want complete freedom and political power (sampooran prabhusatta). Give it any name you like-Khalistan or Sikh homeland. This Sikh raj will be in the light of the teachings of our Gurus and the Shri Guru Granth Sahib ensuring everyone's welfare and equality.

O. Do you have the present Punjab

in mind or something bigger?

A. Let me explain. Due to the foolishness of our leaders, the area over which the Sikhs once ruled has been allowed to shrink. For the present, it is difficult to say what the boundaries will be. What we do have in mind is the rule of Khaisa over the Delhi Takht because our war is against the Brahmin-Bania combine, which will not

> budge an inch without a struggle. We shall fight to the end. Already there is trouble in Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Andhra Pradesh. If dissent against Hindu fundamentalism takes the form of a national uprising, how will the Centre hold on?

> Q. Are you coordinating with any other militant movements?

A. We are in touch with militants in Assam and Jammu and Kashmir. There has been some contact at the lower levels already. We are trying to form a common front. Since our enemy is one we could help one another.

Q. Which countries are helping you? Pakistan's involvement is well known.

A. You say that, not I. I will not name any country but we are getting help from outside. Sometimes we have to buy weapons and sometimes we get

weapons on the basis of an understanding which I can't explain.

Q. Is there a chance of any settlement short of Khalistan?

A. Nothing short of Khalsa raj will be acceptable now. We shall negotiate only if Khalistan is on the agenda.

Q. But where will this place the Sikhs outside Punjab and the Hindus in Puniab?

A. Sikhs outside Punjab have been oblivious of our problems. Now I suggest that they set up a base in Punjab. It will be pragmatic, for some day they will have to shift here. We are not keen to expel or drive out Hindus from

Punjab but they will have to reconcile to the existence of Khalistan.

Q. The Sikhs' anger was reportedly against Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. Since they are no more is there a chance of a settlement now?

A. Whether it was the Nehru-Gandhi family or others like Morarji Desai, V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar or Narasimha Rao, it has been the same for Sikhs. Only individuals change, not the thinking.

A. We will see. The Government will have to work out the parameters on who can contest. If we are not allowed to contest, we will tell the world this Government doesn't consider us to be Hindustanis.

O. But the militants themselves are divided on the issue of elections.

A. Our Panthic Committee was the first to start the struggle in April 1986. when it announced Khalistan and this

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Chennai and eGangoti But whether you admit it or not, concile contesting. Will you still contest? militants of all hues have been indulaing in extortion, kidnappings and even molestation of women. How do you explain this?

A. There are many aspects of this. Since we are underground, it is not possible to keep tabs on everyone. Frankly, if a government with such vast resources at its command can't prevent Pilibhit-type massacres, it is unfair to expect underground groups

> to enforce fairplay. We, in fact, don't want so many youth to take to militancy. Some are in it now for the heck of it. These elements are a headache for us too and we have had to kill a number of them. Unfortunately, we have to fight on two fronts-against the Government and against some militant groups. I concede there've been massacres of innocents. But these've been retaliations against the Government's lawlessness.

> O. Is there any hope of the militants joining Akali leaders?

A. Frankly Akali Dal leaders are irrelevant and most of them want the militants to be exterminated. Those who speak for us, do it only out of for fear of the bullet.

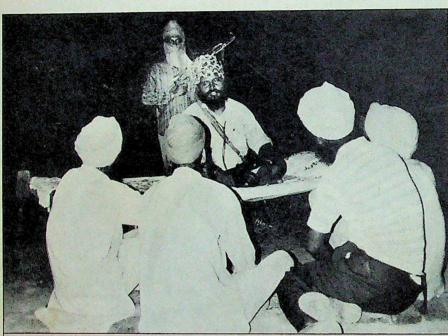
Q. But Simranjit Singh Mann has been speaking for the militants.

A. Mann is mentally bankrupt and keeps contradicting himself,

which could be due to his torture in jail. I have met him and I have been disappointed. His bankruptcy is indicated by the people in his group. One of them sells opium and another used to refer to Sant Bhindranwale as a Chambal dacoit and Congress(I) agent. Yet Mann claims to uphold the ideals of Sant Bhindranwale. He thinks no end of himself just because he spent four years in jail.

Q. Yet, you are reported to have met some Akali leaders during the

A. Yes, some Akali Dal leaders like Sukhjinder Singh, Captain Kanwaljit Singh and Natha Singh Dalam came to meet me in my underground hide-out. But there could be no agreement. I don't trust the Akali leaders.



"We will participate in elections, get a majority and then pass a resolution on Khalistan. And if the Centre prevents us, we will say: 'Kill us with bullets'."

Q. Why did you decide to participate in elections and support the All India Sikh Students Federation (Maniit)?

A. Though we have no faith in the Indian Constitution, we are still in favour of participating in elections. Even after seven years we have gained little international recognition. This we will get only by wresting political power. Without this our image will remain that of killers. If we get a majority and form a government we will pass a resolution for Khalistan. If we are not allowed to function we will say: "Kill us with bullets." Can they do that to elected representatives?

Q. The Government has sensed this and is passing a law to disqualify those with secessionist designs from

committee has stood the test of time. Some people like Dr Sohan Singh, who are government agents, formed a parallel committee to undermine the struggle. On the issue of elections, we were clear from day one that we would contest. Others like Dr Sohan Singh's committee announced a boycott but helped Congressmen like Surinder Singh Kairon. They realised their mistake but could not go back on their decision. The 1985 and 1989 elections taught us that people wanted to exercise their vote. We have not been able to prepare them to boycott polls. What was worse, these militant groups went about killing candidates-mainly Sikhs. You can spread your thoughts not through coercion but love. Our Gurus taught us this.

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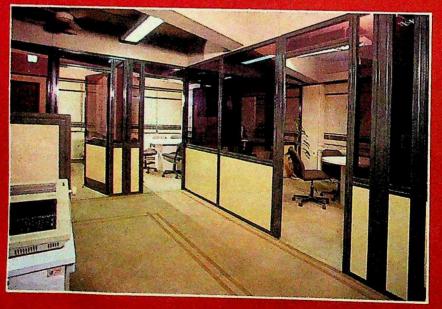
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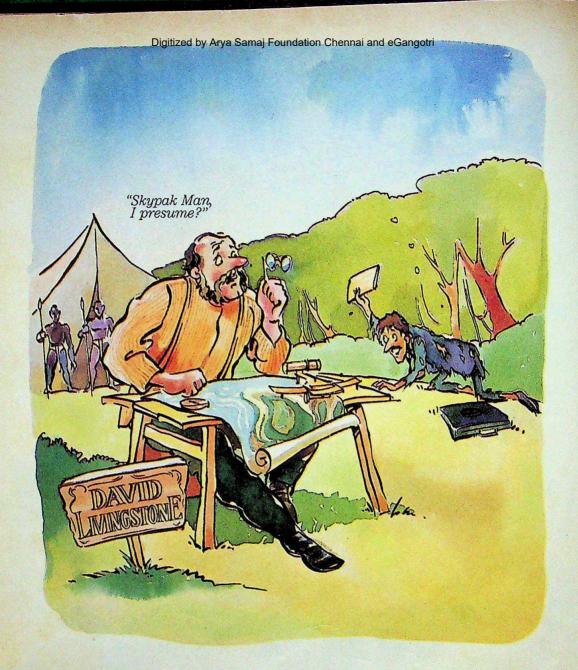
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KASHMIR VALLEY

Challenge of the Veil

Women are actively participting in the war of nerves between militants and security forces and have become key players in the protest movement.

By HARINDER BAWEJA in Srinagar

BEHIND the veil, seems to lurk a will of steel. One which the security forces are finding increasingly difficult to bend. World-wide, women have always participated in

militant movements, but in Kashmir they are fast assuming a key role in sustaining the movement. Armed with a burning hatred against India, the daughters of the Valley are going all out to keep alive the idea of azadi.

In a few short but eventful years, the Dukhtaran-e-Milat (Daughters of Islam) and the Muslim Khawateen Markhaz (MKM—Muslim Women's Centre) have matched their men at taking on the Indian security forces. So much so that the onceshy Muslim woman of Kashmir doesn't need to be led to the battle-streets any longer.

Whenever there is a police raid on their colonies, wives and

mothers now pour out on to the streets, giving enough time to the men inside to flee. Or they raise enough of a hullabaloo, accusing the security forces of molesting them. Worse, sometimes they start beating their chests and tearing their clothes. The security

CRUCIAL ROLE

- Act as conduits, carrying arms and messages for militants.
- Function as decoys, their burgas acting as excellent disguises.
- Harbour militants in their homes, and distract police when they conduct raids.
- Provide medical aid to those injured in shoot-outs between police and militants.
- Spearhead street marches, protesting against police 'excesses'.

forces, already rattled by charges of excesses, can do nothing but beat a tactical retreat.

Nor are they strangers to firearms any longer. As a police officer puts it: "There must be very few houses in Kashmir where the women have not

> seen revolvers and Kalashnikovs." In fact, in mid-1990, 25 women crossed over to Pakistan to receive arms training.

The harbouring of militants is not born of fear. In fact, the women have become crucial factors in bolstering the morale of the militants. The women often put mehendi on their sons' hands before sending them off to Pakistan for training. And it is their daughters who give them a hero's welcome when they finally come home.

One important function they are performing is that of conduits. With their phirans and burqas, the women smuggle in vital messages and transfer

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arms. As terrorist Ghulam Hassan Without, Like Piroza, who till recently Milat Lone revealed during his interrogation, one out of every three burqa-clad persons is a militant. The disguise works like a charm especially when the militants want to shift their hide-outs. The police can only watch in despair as they slip away.

When nothing else works for the women, the Dukhtaran-e-Milat and the MKM take to the streets, braving lathi blows. Dukhtaran-e-Milat chief Aasiya Andrabi and мкм leader Bakhtawar have both suffered head injuries while other activists have landed themselves with hairline fractures. But they are not deterred. As Bakhtawar puts it: "We have decided to come out and fight, for even when we were sitting inside our homes, the security forces would come in and abuse us.'

In this fight to the finish, most activists have given up the little pleasures of here and now, and are busy stoking militant passions. Dressing up, going for picnics, watching moviesthey are all indulgences they can do dressed in trendy salwar-kameezes. now asks angrily: "Whom should I dress for? The security forces?" MKM member Irem puts this renunciation more passionately: "Kashmir has now become like jahanum (hell) for us. We will wait for jannat (paradise) to return." However marriages are encouraged, for, every Kashmiri born means an additional soldier.

Founded in 1987 to fight crimes against women, the Dukhtaran-e-

Women challenge security forces: diversionary tactics

MERAJ-UD-DIN

Milat originally gained popularity when it pressed for 'propriety' in public life. But says Aasiya, it was thanks to the security forces' zulam (crimes) in the Valley that the movement acquired political overtones.

And if push comes to shove, the 9,000-strong Dukhtaran-e-Milat will take up arms, actively. Says its General Secretary Nahida Nasreen: "We are the reserved force. The militants are waging a difficult war which we sent them out for." Clearly, in the coming days the female factor will increasingly colour the ongoing battle between the secessionists and the security forces.

AASIYA ANDRABI

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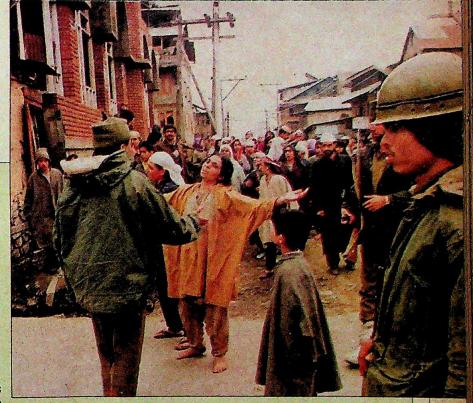
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Female Fury

T'S 6.30 in the morning. Assiya Andrabi is running late. Putting on her burga, she rushes out of her home. With a shoot-out between militants and security forces at Dal Gate, she's going to have a busy day.

As chief of Dukhtaran-e-Milat (Daughters of Islam), the largest women's militant organisation in the Valley, she makes it her business to be where the action is. Three militants have been killed and a woman and child injured. Rafiqa, who has two bullets in her right arm, is in immediate need of blood. Aasiya takes charge. Ordering two burqaclad women who have joined her to get two bottles of blood from the Islamic Blood Bank, she races up two flights of stairs to calm down fouryear-old Saajid's mother. Fifteen minutes later, she's on her way to dispense solace to families of the three militants.

Under Aasiya and General Secretary Nahida Nasreen, the Dukhtaran-e-Milat runs a smoothly-oiled network. Fanning out into the mohallas and villages of the Valley,



its members reach spots where encounters have taken place-consoling the injured, drawing out women to speak of the security forces' 'excesses', and collecting money.

Ironically, only four years ago, the queen of the anti-India brigade was annoyed with her brother when he forbade her from going to Dalhousie for her doctorate. She didn't agree with his reason, that all Indians were anti-Kashmiri. A graduate in biochemistry, bacteriology and dietmanagement. Aasiya remembers how bitterly she wept on that past occasion.

But her perspective altered when she chanced upon a book: Khawateen ke Dilon ki Baaten (From the Heart of the Women) which carried stories about women revolutionaries. "I decided then that I too would work as a revolutionary," she says.

A decision she has stood by ever since. Immensely popular in the Valley, her organisation runs the Islamic Relief Committee and Islamic Blood Bank, to which its activists donate blood. Says Aasiya: "We don't mind paying with our blood. We have told our brothers to return only after Kashmir has been liberated." In this daughter of Islam the fire of azadi, newly-kindled, obviously burns deep.

--- HARINDER BAWEJA in Srinagar

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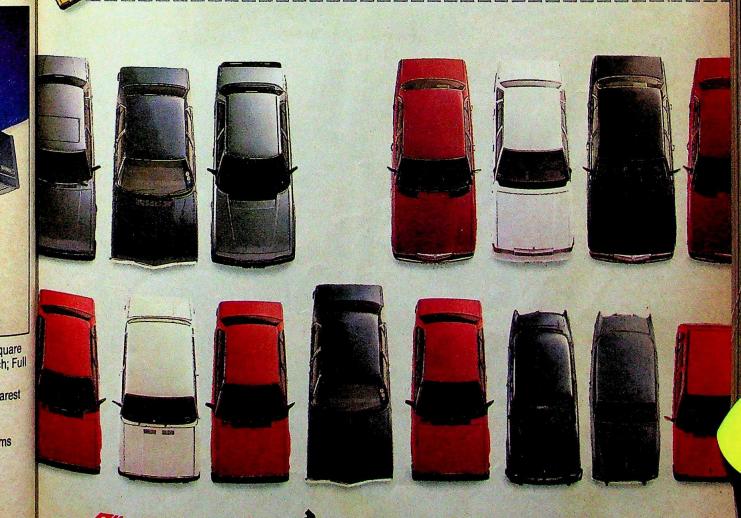
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"They've crossed limits even Zia didn't"

IN Bilawal House, the imposing fortress in Karachi that is the abode of Benazir Bhutto's family, life seems back to 'normal'. Endless wait for a dear one's release, anxiety and fear of what the future may bring. A tell-tale caricature of a forlorn Benazir, drawn by the famous artist Yusuf Lodhi, hangs on the wall, with the inscription "and every little absence is an age". Benazir herself, having launched an open campaign for the ouster of the Nawaz Sharif Government last fortnight, seems cheerful, relishing the return of the street-fighting days. There is no sign of anxiety though she confesses that while driving around in her Mitsubishi Pajero she listens to sad songs sung by Mukesh.

Many in Pakistan think her campaign against Nawaz Sharif has fizzled out as the combined Opposition stopped short of

resigning en masse from the National Assembly as threatened. But Benazir insists that she "definitely intends to return to power". Having put on considerable weight she looks quite different from the frail, freckled Benazir of the past. But some of the old defiance and wit is back and she displayed it amply in an exclusive two-hour interview with Features Editor shekhar Gupta a day after the attack on her car in Karachi's suburbs. Excerpts:

Q. What happened at Orangi last night?

A. On August 14 Nawaz Sharif said that he wants to chop the PPP into pieces. Last night I get attacked. What are we to make of it? But these things make us laugh. Remember, Zia said on American TV that the PPP is a plant that he wants to pull out from the roots, chop into pieces, and throw it out of the country. Ultimately he himself disintegrated.

Q. But isn't that an indication of the law and order situation in Karachi?

A. Karachi is not a part of Pakistan any longer. It is a terrorist city because terrorists are in power. The MOM (Mohajir Qaumi Mahaz, headed by Altaf Hussain) controls everything. So many members of my party have been murdered. Five have been burnt alive. Pir Pagaro's (a politico-religious leader) son-in-law was murdered and the killer has told the police that Altaf Hussain sent him. Najib, a Pakistan Students Federation boy who was killed last year. said in his dying declaration that one of the four assailants said: "Here is that dog Najib whom Altaf Hussain asked us to murder." So there are two cases implicating Altaf Hussain in murder but nothing has been done. Recently a Pakistani Rangers major and two jawans

> Benazir on hunger strike to oust Sharif

were kidnapped and tortured by a minister and a member of the National Assembly (MNA). Salim Shehzad, but neither has been prosecuted. These terrorists are part and parcel of the Government. *Time* magazine in its story titled 'The Sleaziest Bank' has said that there is a black network in Karachi with 1,500 members indulging in blackmail and extortion and I won't be surprised if it's the MQM.

Q. Isn't that a very serious allegation?

A. I want to state it on record that Altaf Hussain will turn out to be far more dangerous than Sheikh Mujib.

O. What are your demands?

A. We are demanding fresh elections under an interim government by national consensus because the last elections

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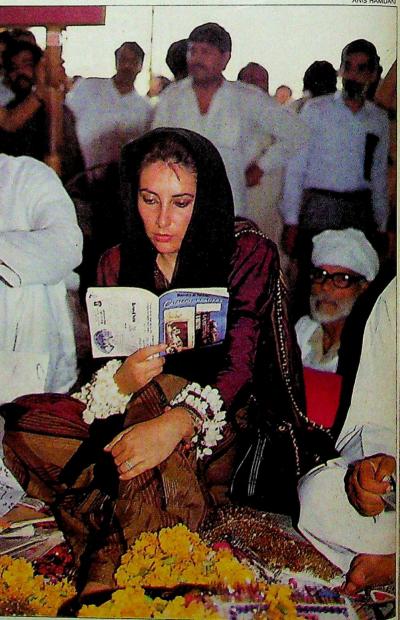
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former federal minister Mustafa Khar and former 111 ally Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan have also said the same thing. And now a key adviser to Nawaz Sharif, Navid Malik, has said that he was in charge of the dirty tricks. There has been no denial. In fact Malik resurfaced to say that the intelligence agencies are trying to kidnap him.

Q. Who is behind the spate of political kidnappings?

A. At the time of the Senate elections five of our MNAs were kidnapped and they turned up at the farm of the home adviser to the chief minister. And who is he? He is the son-in-law (Irfanullah Marwat) of the President. Today the chief minister, Jam Sadiq Ali, is not running Sindh. It is the President. through his unelected son-in-law. And what is his background? He was working for a multinational company and was dismissed for embezzlement in a cotton scandal. Subsequently, when Ishaq Khan became commerce minister, he became the cotton king of Pakistan. I tried to stop his corruption and the President saw it as an affront. He also saw it

as an affront when I said that who is anybody creditworthy will not be given loans because that meant that his other son-inlaw Anwar Saifullah won't get loans. Now the President has made up to him by giving himabank, the Khyber Bank.

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Q. Is that why the President worked against you?

A. The President worked against me from the very beginning. At the SAARC conference in Islamabad I had those meetings with Rajiv Gandhi. In America when a President taped his opponents there was the Watergate scandal. Here we had a President taping his prime minister and then trying to throw her out on trumped-up charges.

Q. What made Jam Sadiq fall out with you?

A. Jam is just a figurehead. The President thinks that he looks like a monster so let's keep him. People will think he is the monster. But thereality is he slurs. He can't walk. He is just a showboy for the President's son-in-law.

Q. Have you tried seeking redressal from the judiciary? A. If there was not a contempt law in Pakistan I would have given you my frank opinion. Advisers to Nawaz Sharif's family have been made judges. And one judge is Ghaznafar Ali Shah, who was sentenced by a military court, who went into exile, who used to go pub-crawling with Jam Sadiq. Our judicial system has collapsed. Nabi Sheikh Junejo, who was killed, actually wrote in a judgement that because President Bush has said people are not sentenced in Pakistan I hereby sentence eight people to death.

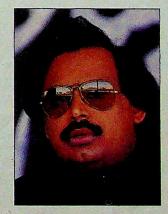
Q. You seem to have no faith in the system? A. You have a fraudulent Parliament. A mauled judiciary and a media that is intimidated. All they have been obsessed with six with since August 1990 is to somehow drive me out of this

were rigged. Former prime minister Chullam Mustala Jatoi, country. First they charged my husband with kidnapping. then corruption, then murder. They brought seven charges against me. They brought charges against my security guards, even tenants on my lands. They have crossed limits even Zia didn't. All they do is write about me, so much that you would think Benazir is still in power. She is leaving the country this week. Next, she is about to have a secret deal for the sake of her husband. Time and again I have told them there is no question of compromising. Because I have a legacy. My father and grandfather were both prime ministers. And I was the first elected woman prime minister in the Muslim world. And I cannot have a future Muslim woman leader taunted that like Benazir Bhutto, when the heat is on, she will quit. I am not prepared to say, all right, I will go and live in London for the sake of my husband until Ishaq Khan leaves this world.

Q. Have they offered you a quid pro quo in case you leave? A. Someone said to me don't you know they will do to your husband what they did to your father? I said isn't it awfully shabby of you to tell a woman who has already lost her father

 On Nawaz Sharif, **Prime Minister**

"He is ruining this country. He is intellectually incapacitated. He does not have a degree in economics."



and her brother that she will lose her husband too? On August 8, a person advised my father-in-law to ask his son to divorce me. They had the example of Razia Sultana so they thought they would do a modern-day Romeo and Juliet or Razia.

Q. How is your husband taking it?

A. I am very proud of him. Frankly, neither I nor my family and friends (laughs) ever felt that Asif will face it as courageously as he has. They have tried everything to break his dignity. They won't give him Coca-Cola. They won't give him ice. No radio, no TV. I used to tell Asif to leave the country before he was arrested. I told him you don't know what jail is like but I have seen it. So many of my father's ministers, strong people, broke down in jail. But he said I have my own tribe, my own honour. People shouldn't tell the Zardaris tomorrow that your sardar fled. He keeps telling me he is

happier that he is in jail and not I. And I tell him, don't worry, sooner or later I will join you in prison because jo pesha humney zindagi mein adopt kiya hai to us peshe ke andar is kisim ke kaam to hote hee hain. (In our chosen profession, such things happen.)

Q. But the impression is you kept quiet for too long. A. That was an insidious campaign. They can plant anything. And people like to read about us. It is like the Gandhis. You put them on the cover, you will sell. Nobody wants to read about Ishaq, or his son-in-law or Nawaz and what is that word, his peccadillos. But we have glamour. family history and people want to read about us. On October 10 my husband was arrested. They said she is sitting by her husband, like Patience on a monument, pining, refusing to move. The reality is I was moving. I was not able to be with my husband and naturally I had guilt feelings. Only my husband



On Altaf Hussain, **MQM** chief

"I want to state it on record that he will turn out to be more dangerous for **Pakistan than** Sheikh Mujib."

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri against me. Q. But you too made provocative statements on Kashmir?

had a right to have complaints against me.

Q. But why so many foreign trips?

A. Well I keep travelling overseas and it annoys them no end. But lintend to keep on travelling because these contacts are important. Important also at the present date to give a more positive picture of Pakistan than that of a government held hostage to the mullahs who depend on repression.

Q. Why have you been accusing the present Government of making concessions on the nuclear issue?

A. When I was in power I said Pakistan is committed to non-proliferation. I say the same thing now. But then Nawaz Sharif said Benazir is soft and I want to explode the atom bomb even if we have to eat grass. Well, we are eating grass but no atom bomb has been exploded and he has agreed to unilaterally sign the NPT. I have never said that. I say the two countries should work out a mutual arms reduction approach. But he just doesn't have the nerve.

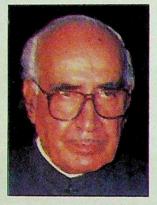
Q. How do you say that?

A. I was in Beijing when the Salman Rushdie affair

began. It was suggested to me that I should return. I said, no. China is important for us and I will stay here. I have my minister of interior back home, my kitchen cabinet. If they can't handle it they have to go. Now as soon as Islampura killings took place Nawaz Sharif said that in 24 hours I am going to catch the killers so I am not going to Japan. The Japanese were miffed. And he couldn't catch the killers. Because he is not the sho. He is supposed to be the prime minister. Actually, what surprises me about Nawaz Sharifis that he is a Capricorn and so was my father, but my father was a totally different person.

Q. How has the Government handled Kashmir?

A. They played right into India's hands. They have done what we've been accusing India of do-



▶ On Jam Sadiq Ali, Sindh Chief Minister

"The reality is he slurs, and cannot even walk. He is just a showboy for the President's son-in-law."

ing for 40 years. Nawaz Sharif is simply a disgrace. He doesn't have the political appreciation or vision. He sees everything in terms of power politics. And the President himself is a very, very narrow-minded man. It is a serious setback to Pakistan's interests to have arrested the prime minister of Azad Kashmir, rigged the state election, trampled over it and to have alienated the Kashmiris to such an extent that they are saying, well, the Indians have done this to us, the Pakistanis have done this to us, so we don't want India and we don't want Pakistan. We want independent Kashmir. I believe an independent Kashmir will have very serious consequences for the subcontinent. Nawaz Sharif had been saying he wanted to conquer (Indian) occupied Kashmir. Little did we know that he will go and conquer Azad Kashmir. Why does he make these bellicose statements?

A. We have a stand on Kashmir. And I believe that the trouble in Kashmir is very different from the trouble in your Punjab even though the Sikhs are going to be upset about this. Kashmir is an indigenous uprising caused by historical factors. We have to solve this problem. Rajiv Gandhi and I made tremendous progress.

O. But Rajiv said he had arrived at a solution with Zia?

A. He told me that the first time I met him. And I went blank. He was surprised that we still brought Kashmir up.

Q. What do you think of the Government's economic

A. Nawaz Sharif is confusing denationalisation with privatisation. Privatisation means small shares sold to a large number of people. On the Assembly floor I told them the difference and they blushed and blushed and blushed. He is handing over the commanding heights of economy to a few monopoly capitalists. Let's not forget that communism

◆ On Ghulam Ishaq Khan, President

"He taped my talks with Rajiv Gandhi in Islamabad, He tried to oust me on trumped-up charges."



came as a reaction to the excesses of monopoly capitalism. I am warning you, even in India, don't be dazzled by privatisation. Do it certainly, but with sensitivity. Nawaz Sharif is ruining this country. He is intellectually incapacitated. I am told he went to the national defence college and instead of saying the US, said 'us' 'us' 'us' three times. He is a very amiable man. But he does not have a degree in economics.

O. How has the Government handled the BCCI affair?

A. They seem scared that the BCCI will close down and all their dark secrets will come out. It was a great institution but a handful of people who were frauds and dopedealers brought it down to the ground. There has to be an inquiry. I would like know how President's son-in-law

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who is a car-dealer and who sold a Rolls Royce, which he had bought for Rs 5 lakh, for Rs 20 lakh to the Presidency got a job with the BCCI. Our President is really mired deep in the dark side of the BCCI.

Q. Why did Jam Sadiq say that Abedi won't be

A. Because he must be indebted to them. Maybe he was into money-laundering. He also got a stipend from them. As Shakespeare said, kingship has no kith, no kin.

Q. How do you look at the future?

A. We will fight for democracy. In the next 3-6 months economic pressures will increase. So will polarisation. The army will not be able to cope with this defence budget and the army-civil relations will deteriorate. I certainly don't see this Government completing its term.













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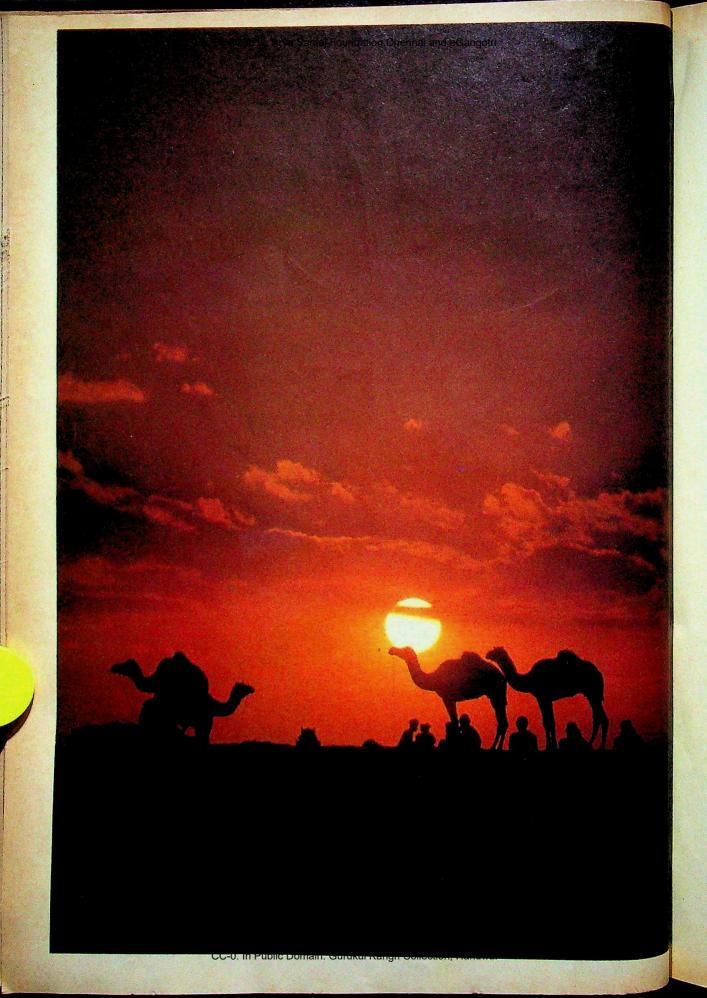
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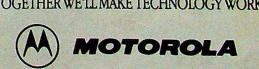


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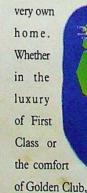
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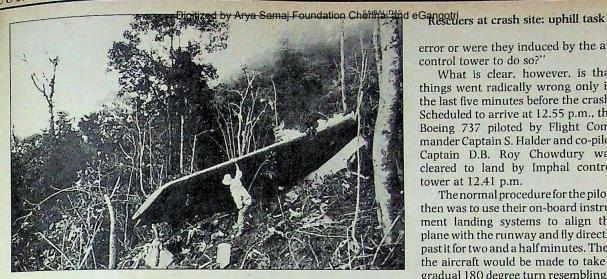
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An Avoidable Tragedy

Another grim reminder of lax standards



WITH three flights a day, Imphal airport in Manipur is rarely busy. But on that fateful midday of August 16, when Flight IC 257 from Calcutta was

about to land, two other aircraft were on the ground readying for take-off. One of them, an Airbus A 320 to Delhi, was 20 minutes late. And the other, a Boeing 737 to Silchar, was around four hours late.

Almost a fortnight after Flight IC 257 strayed from its flight path and rammed into the nearby Thanjig hills killing all 69 people on board, aviation experts are debating over whether it was the "traffic jam" that caused the tragedy or simply pilot error. Said a senior civil aviation official: "The key questions are why did pilots following an apparently normal flight path suddenly go astray? Did they make the

POSSIBLE CAUSES

■ IC 257 pilots violated laiddown landing procedures, overshot flight path, resulting in crash.

OR

Imphal Control tower wrongly asked IC 257 to delay landing for another flight to take off.

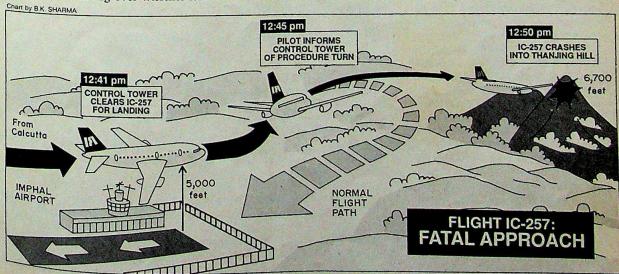
error or were they induced by the air control tower to do so?"

What is clear, however, is that things went radically wrong only in the last five minutes before the crash. Scheduled to arrive at 12.55 p.m., the Boeing 737 piloted by Flight Commander Captain S. Halder and co-pilot Captain D.B. Roy Chowdury was cleared to land by Imphal control tower at 12.41 p.m.

The normal procedure for the pilots then was to use their on-board instrument landing systems to align the plane with the runway and fly directly past it for two and a half minutes. Then the aircrast would be made to take a gradual 180 degree turn resembling a 'P' in approximately three minutes. That would bring the nose of the aircraft on line with the runway.

The pilots were a minute and a half late in making the procedure turn. That would have put the aircraft around 5 km away from the normal flight path. Then came the crucial error; instead of completing the halfcircle, the aircraft kept on going till it rammed into the Thanjig hills, almost 30 km away (see chart).

There are conflicting reports as to why the pilots kept heading to disaster. The control tower maintains that there were no anomalies and the last contact with the aircraft was when Rov Chowdhury reported that they had begun the procedure turn. Since the plane did not report any engine or mechanical failure and sabotage has been ruled out, the needle of error would obviously point to the pilots. They could have failed to accurately time their procedural turn, lost their bearings because of the thick cloud



Digitized by Arva Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGanggtrice is that the whole systemmistake, rammed into a hill. Aviation experts with access to the cockpit recordings say it tends to corroborate that theory because the conversation between the pilots remained normal right up to the crash.

The other possible explanation is that the control tower induced the error. This is because the Delhi-bound A320 was allowed to take off almost simultaneously. In fact, Civil Aviation Minister Madhayrao Scindia's statement in Parliament indicated that the A320 was airborne when the tower asked it to search for IC 257 after repeatedly failing to make contact. But the tower is usually not supposed to clear an aircraft for take off after giving permission to an airborne jet to land.

The cockpit voice recorder apparently gives no indication of the tower requesting IC 257 to delay its landing. Even if it had, Captain Halder, the commander, could have ordered the tower to rescind its decision and insist on landing first. If the pilots had failed to do so, then the fault was equally theirs. Hopefully, with the ministry appointing a high court judge to hold an inquiry. the real truth of what caused the crash will come out.

But IC 257's fate was a grim reminder of what a mess the country's civil aviation continues to be in. The disastrous record of four major crashes in three years doesn't seem to have helped. For instance, Imphal airport is still not equipped with distance measuring equipment that would have told the pilots how far they really were from the runway and averted a crash. Nor do pilots seem adequately trained to deal with faulty tower messages-a recurring problem in many crashes. As Civil Aviation Secretary A.V. Ganesan said: "The crash highlights the need for an absolutely strict adherence to landing procedure by all concerned."

For the relatives of the 69 victims, the lack of professionalism was a tragic reality. The site of the crash was just a mass of mangled steel and burning flesh. A little girl was still clutching a rakhi. A tyre hung on a branch along with a severed body. Identifying the dead was a gruesome task. In one case, a toe-ring worn by an air-hostess was the only identifying mark. In another, a gold tooth in a smashed skull.

Yet horrific scenes like these hardly seem to have shaken the Civil Aviation Ministry out of its dangerous lethargy.

> -RAJ CHENGAPPA with RUBEN BANERJEE in Imphal

Officers' Ire

Police come under fire



THE police in Punjab recently came in for an attack from the bureaucrats. The occasion: a meeting of top secretaries called by Chief Secretary Tejendra Khanna

on July 29 in Chandigarh.

The first shot came when an officer said discussion was futile as things continued to defy improvement. This sparked off a volley of further criticism. Khanna promised that the points raised would be followed up.

Some of the crucial points raised by the IAS officers, especially I.S. Bindra, N.S. Rattan, Bikramjit Singh, Darshan Kumar, Ravneet Kaur and former home secretary R.S. Mann, were:

▶ The posts of home secretary and financial commissioner (home) and district magistrates in the field stood negated.

► The police were usurping powers of the other departments.

 The police had a vested interest in keeping the problem alive.

Though no details were recorded, a follow-up session of the chief secretary, home secretary and the DGP and presided over by K.L. Wats, advisor to the governor, decided to hold joint inquiries by magistrates and police officers into allegations of police excesses. One allegation, for instance, was made recently by village sarpanches when they met the governor.

What the police officers say in their

including the judiciary and bureau. cracy-has collapsed. And the need of the hour is a total overhaul

The first time civil officers protested against the police was in 1986 when the then deputy commissioner of Amritsar Ramesh Inder Singh, had in a letter called the police "uniformed terrorists" The DC of Ludhiana, K.R. Lakhanpal had written to the chief secretary that the district magistrate had become irrel. evant. The fallout: Lakhanpal with diffi-

Cartoon by JAYANTO

culty managed to get a posting to Delhi. Another senior IAS officer S.P. Bagla, who raised the issue of making the police accountable, was shunted to the Northeast. And even notings about police abuse of power sent to a former advisor to the governor could not be traced. With the situation in Punjab showing no improvement, the police raj too is not loosening its grip and angry notings by bureaucrats may continue to disappear. Like many "suspected militants".

KANWAR SANDHU

AMBANI-WADIA CLASH

Paper Wars

N the flood of dramatic front-page news last fortnight, only two newspapers devoted their prominent 'anchor' slot to one subject: l'affaire Larsen & Toubro (L&T). Both the Goenka-run Indian Express and the Ambani-owned Business and Political Observer (BPO) went to town on the move to reinduct Dhirubhai Ambani as chairman of the engineering giant.

Their objective: to sell their own version of 'the truth involves us all' (Express' slogan). The Express had relaunched a series on the 'questionable

transaction' that led to the L&T take over. BPO retaliated with the story ...Because it involves Nusli Wadia The insinuation: the Express campaign was orchestrated by arch Ambanirival Wadia, chairman of Bombay Dyeins But Wadia said: "I have no busines rivalry with Ambanis, nor do I wan anything they've got or want." Added Express Executive Editor Prabhi Chawla: "I am reporting facts. Linking it with the corporate war doesn't make the story untrue."

BPO's articles verged on the liber lous. Wadia was charged will journalistic skulduggery of the lower order". It also accused Maneck Daval the Express writer, of "pathological lying". Reliance's top PR man Ton's

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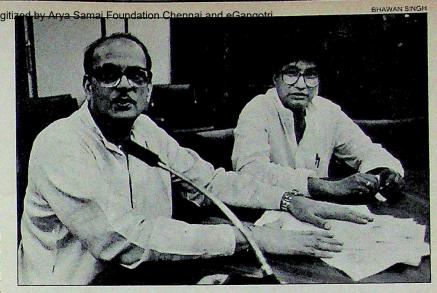
Crisis Deepens

No let-up in VP-Ajit battle

7 HEN V.P. Singh resigned as Janata Dal Parliamentary Party leader late on August 24. it was a tactical retreat in his ongoing battle with Ajit Singh, for the Jat leader was working at hoisting the Raja with his own petard. Ajit Singh insisted the party posts criterion worked out at the Puri convention was not fully implemented. This involved reservation of 60 per cent posts for oBCs, minorities and Harijans and setting an income ceiling, which an Ajit confident had suggested could be the country's per capita income. This was farcical, for it would have precluded every party leader. Ajit's plan was to focus on the Raja's duplicity. The Raja resigned; but the PAC panicked, and on August 26 gave the income criterion a final burial while asking V.P. Singh to withdraw his resignation.

But another thing that got buried was the peace committee of George Fernandes. Madhu Dandavate, Surendra Mohan and Rasheed Masood. And both the warring camps started dropping hints that another split in the Janata Dal was imminent.

That would put an end to the crisis precipitated by Ajit Singh's letters to party President S.R. Bommai. He had charged V.P. Singh with using the forum which best suits him—he has used the PAC, the parliamentary board and the National Front secretariat. But shymg away from an unfriendly national executive, whose recent meeting was



V.P. Singh with Ajit Singh: elusive peace

postponed, Ajit pressed on.

To blunt V.P. Singh's moral edge, Aiit also said that he had been flouting the one-man-one-post principle by clinging on as the leader of the National Front-Left coordination committee and the convener of the Front-Left presidium, besides the post he resigned.

By not joining issue with Ajit, V.P. Singh wants to tell partymen that Ajit is harming the party by going to the press. His camp's strategy too is to discredit Ajit: by spreading the word that he will cross over to the Congress(I) the day he musters 19 MPs to sidestep the antidefection law. That done, he can be comfortably expelled like Arun Nehru and Arif Mohammed Khan were.

So for each camp it's crucial to not only hold on to its base but also broaden it. The slashed fertiliser subsidy has

come as a godsend for both to woo the farmers' lobby. V.P. Singh has started touring Uttar Pradesh and was organising, with the Left Front, a farmers' rally in Delhi later this month.

Charan Singh's son sees the subsidy issue as an opportunity to truly inherit his father's constituency not only in Uttar Pradesh but also in states like Harvana and Rajasthan. He was going on a barnstorming tour to address farmers' rallies, "It will give the party a new face over and above the Mandal issue," pointed out an Ajit backer. Ajit also flew to Bihar where he successfully wooed the state Janata Dal chief Ram Sunder Das, a rival of Laloo Prasad Yadav who is firmly with V.P. Singh.

Clear pointers that the two titans are heading towards a last-ditch battle. The national executive meeting on September 7-8 may well prove the occasion to formalise the split. -ZAFAR AGHA

Wadia (left); and Ambani





While Express hit out at the Ambani takeover of L&T, BPO's was a personal attack on Wadia. Jesudasan too pitched in, describing the Express stories as "the hurriedly put-together cocktail of lies by Wadia's Sancho Panza, Davar".

Countered Express Executive Director Vivek Goenka: "Express is not Wadia's, but BPO is an Ambani pamphlet." BPO Editor-in-Chief B.N. Unival's justification: "Since 1982 one newspaper has been hounding one industry. Now BPO has taken up the Ambanis' cause."

Express renewed its attack on the Ambanis with R.V. Pandit raising question of national security as L&T has some defence-related projects. Davar, who runs Sterling Newspapers, too wrote against the concentration of public money in the hands of those who have "resorted to fraud, smuggling, suborning of institutions and perversion of the nation's politics."

Both papers also prominently displayed statements by political leaders in support of their stands. V.P. Singh and BJP's Jaswant Singh were one with the Express campaign. And BPO prominently published a letter from N.T. Rama Rao opposing V.P. Singh's stand.

The Ambanis who earlier felt handicapped without a newspaper when assailed by Expresss before the start of BPO 10 months ago, are matching volley for volley. And the mudslinging is likely to escalate with the EGM of L&T postponed to mid-September. -W.P.S. SIDHU

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Back to Basics

Rethinking on militants



THE euphoria over the release of Indian Oil Executive Director K. Doraiswamy was shortlived. While the militants were still celebrating the freeing

of nine of their members, the Centre was faced with a grim question. Would it swap militants for hostages every time? That it had no answer to that exposed the Government's utter bankruptcy in formulating a policy on terrorism, especially its now most frequent manifestation: kidnappings.

The handling of the Doraiswamy

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangetriasum law and order approach deemed fit by Union Home Minister S.B. Chavan. A few contemplated moves, however, do

not pass muster.

One suggestion is to set up citizens' advisory committees to act as a buffer between the state administration and the estranged population. Governor G.C. Saxena had tried the same, but not one person came forward to join a committee. Even if some do, the administration will then be saddled with more soft targets needing security.

Another idea is to create an 'atmosphere for dialogue'. But the time for that is perhaps past. Pakistan, by playing midwife to several militant gangsabout 150 in the Valley on last counthas ensured inter-gang rivalry and near-impossibility of talks. However, senior Kashmir cadre bureaucrats have suggested the names of some local citizens, who enjoy the trust of militants



abduction is a classic case of the ad hoc approach that successive governments have followed in the Valley. The Congress(I) was the first to pillory the V.P. Singh government for exchanging five militants for Musti Mohammed Sayeed's daughter, Rubaiya. Its own government is now in the dock for a similar act.

By conceding all their demands, the Centre has lost much ground to the militants who have displayed to the populace that it is they who hold sway in the Valley. Equally serious is the growing demoralisation among the paramilitary forces who fight pitched battles with the militants, only to see them being meekly let off.

The Centre is trying, before it is too late, to make amends. New policies are being drafted to combine Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's soft line and the

Doraiswamy: emotional renunion

and can act as mediators. But then these citizens too want secession to be on the agenda.

It is the example of Wajahat Habibullah, an IAS officer, who broke the deadlock over Doraiswamy, which has set the Centre thinking along these lines. The bureaucrats and local police can serve to alter the image of the Centre in a state currently perceived as being run by paramilitary forces and displaced advisors. As one bureaucrat said: "The same set-up which plans operations against the militants also negotiates for the release of hostages. How do you expect the two sides to trust each other?"

Caught in this complex maze, the Centre will have to move quickly to find a way out. -HARINDER BAWEJA



ANDHRA PRADESH

Peace Deal

Reddy's relief sops to Harijans



THE fall-out was inevitable. The blooded massacre of eight Harijans Tsundur on August 6 was used by the many detractors of Andhra

Pradesh Chief Minister N. Janardhana Reddy to step up the heat on him.

But he is made of sterner stuff. He has worked out a package to appease MLAs. Its highlights: cheap plots of land; a monthly telephone allowance of Rs 1,500; a travel and medical allowance of Rs 2,500; an easy car loan for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe MLAs.

The chief minister also announced a grant of Rs 10.000, an acre of land, and a job for one member from each victim's family. The unimpressed Harijans accused him of glossing over the role of the police. Apparently, upper caste Reddys had made a premeditated attack on the Harijans, with the police as onlooker or abetter. Three days later, the bodies were recovered from an irrigation canal. The retaliation was swift: a Reddy was killed, many of their houses set ablaze and one razed, with angry Harijans burying their dead there.

While the chief minister accepted most of the Harijans' demands like setting up of a special court, the Opposition is trying to elicit maximum mileage from May c bottles distrib wheat mills; export No

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Accountability Issue



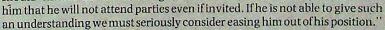
THE controversial but colourful K.P.S. Gill. director-general of the CRPF, is again the subject of embarrassing debate within the Home Ministry. There is a strong move by those who see him as the toughest law and order man around to bring him back to Punjab as advisor to the new governor. And an equally determined one by his detractors, who view him as the champion of runaway Police Rai, to stop him.

In this tussle, an incident that made front page headlines more than three years ago may come back to haunt Gill and his supporters as well to put the Home Ministry in an uncomfortable bind. In July 1988, a senior IAs officer Rupan Deol-Bajaj accused Gill—then director-general of police—of misbehaving with her under the influence of liquor at a party hosted by home secretary S.L. Kapur. Following a public ruckus governor S.S. Ray asked advisor Julio Ribeiro to investigate the incident and file a report to him. Its contents were marked top secret. This same report was forwarded on July 31 by the governor's office to the Centre. But was it the same report?

What is now causing tremors in the Home Ministry is the discovery that the

most sensitive portion of this report—in which Ribeiro excoriated Gill, and Ray endorsed the findings—were excluded from the version forwarded to the Home Ministry which contained only a summary of Bajaj's charges. The missing parts have now conveniently been made available to Home Ministry officials.

Ribeiro wrote: "Gill has been known to misbehave with women under the influence of liquor. I had warned him about this habit and he had promised to avoid drinking at parties. He has not kept his promise and this is not expected of a senior officer.... The image of the Government and police will be severely damaged if Gill is not stopped from misbehaving in this manner. We should extract an undertaking from



Ray wrote at the bottom in his own hand: "I spoke to the DGP...and expressed my dissatisfaction with what he had done and told him this kind of thing cannot be tolerated. I reprimanded him and told him he must give up drinking altogether..."

In a lawsuit that Bajaj filed against Gill on January 18, 1989, she demanded that this report be produced as evidence. But the Punjab Government immediately obtained a high court order allowing it to withhold it as a privileged document. The matter is now in the Supreme Court.

On January 26, 1989, Gill received the Padma Shri award, and in 1991 he was appointed as director-general of the CRPF. The question now being raised is whether Gill would have so been honoured had the Home Ministry had access to the full report. And now that the deleted portions have been leaked out—no doubt by officials who may have an axe to grind against Gill—will the Home Ministry uncritically recommend his being sent to Punjab as advisor?

No matter what the bureaucratic turf battles that have led to the new controversy, there is a larger issue at stake: that of official accountability and especially in a state where police-civilian relations are strained to breaking point. Any cover-up of official wrongdoing by invoking executive privilege in the courts or withholding sensitive information from higher authorities in order to shield top officials can only lead to a debilitating erosion of credibility for the Government in its fight against crime and terrorism.

Harijans massacred in Tsundur: passive role of police

the incident. Telugu Desam MLAs stonewalled the proceedings of the Assembly. The Opposition also criticised as electoral sops several

May orders: reduction in sales tax on bottles and cartons used by whiskey distributors; waiving of sales tax on wheat and wheat products for flour mills; and sales tax exemption on oil exported from the state.

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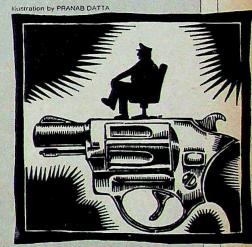
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Not to be edged out, Congress(I) dissidents blamed the same measures for 'sullying' the party image. Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy even demanded that the chief minister step down. Shockingly enough, the massacre news did not reach nearby Guntur until the next day. And the chief minister, away in Delhi, could not visit Tsundur till the day after, prompting Congress(I) MLA N. Srinivasulu Reddy to ask: "Is the Government here in Hyderabad or away on the moon?"

But Janardhana Reddy countered such charges saying: "Many are trying to make political capital of a human tragedy. We are doing all we can and the negligent police officers will be booked." But what he is banking on is Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's support. He is going all out to get him a Lok Sabha seat in the state. But whether that will make Janardhana Reddy's position less shaky remains to be seen.

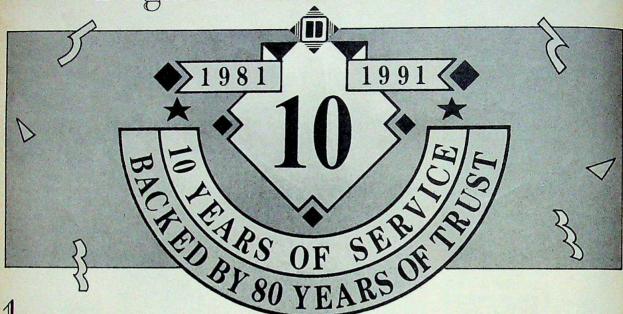
-AMARNATH K. MENON



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EQUITY PARTICIPATION BY LEADING

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MADHYA PRADESH

Free Run

BIP workers get off lightly

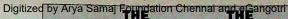


IN the BJP lexicon, public interest can have a limited meaning. Within a year, its government in Madhya Pradesh has withdrawn about 200

criminal cases, the beneficiaries being more than 1,000 party members facing trial. The ostensible reason for the burst of generosity: safeguarding "the interests of public justice".

Those exonerated were facing trial for murder, attempt at murder, rioting, assault and cheating. Among them: Vice-President Vijayaraje Scindia's aide Sambhaji Rao Angre; Minister of State for Public Health Engineering Dhyanendra Singh; Minister of State for Tourism Brij Mohan Agarwal; and MLAs Shakrajeet Nayak and Gopikrishna Nema.

Ironically, soon after the BJP came to power, Chief Minister Sunderlal Patwa had said: "Our government will adhere to the rule of law." But under the guise of its declared policy of lifting cases of political nature against 'all' political workers, the BJP has given almost exclusive attention to its own cadres. Patwa's reasoning was that justice should be done to opposition workers who, during the Congress regime, had been "falsely implicated in criminal cases". This would imply general amnesty in all political cases involving gheraos, dharnas, demonstrations, and road blockades.



ACCUSED



Sambhaji **Rao Angre** Vijayaraje Scindia's political aide) Charged with theft of objets d'art from **Gwalior Palace** Museum

CHARGES

Despite the statements of 83 witnesses and several documents.

case withdrawn

CURRENT

STATUS



Dhyanendra Singh (Minister of State for **Public Health** Engineering)

Also Charged with theft of priceless antiques from Gwalior Palace Museum

Case withdrawn, along with two connected cases. Claims they were politically motivated.



Brij Mohan Agarwal (Minister of State for Tourism)

Charged with assault, rioting, trespassing, and criminal intimidation

4 cases, relating to assault, rioting, trespassing and intimidation. withdrawn, Some cases remain.

But not all the withdrawn cases have been political in nature. Angre and Dhyanendra Singh were accused of stealing priceless objets d'art from Gwalior palace. The four cases which Agarwal was facing related to assault, rioting, trespassing, and criminal intimidation. Nayak was facing trial for allegedly siphoning funds from drought relief work while Nema had to contend with charges of assault, rioting, criminal intimidation misbehaviour. The Government can withdraw cases under Section 321 of the CrPC, but it can be checked by either the administration or judiciary. Chhatarpur party leader Matadeen Chourasia, named in two murder cases, has been one such rare example.

But while letting off its own flock,

the Government is making sure the courts are kept busy. Externment proceedings under the Madhya Pradesh Security Act have, for instance, been initiated against Chhattisgarh trade union leader and social reformer Shanker Guha Niyogi. People's Union for Civil Liberties' Organising Secretary Rajendra Sail perceives a pattern in this. In Chhattisgarh alone, he says, there are 86 workers "not under the BJP umbrella", who are being systematically harassed.

Ironically, when the BIP was in the opposition, it missed no opportunity to pan the Congress(I) government's withdrawal of cases, dubbing it as an "abortion of justice". Perhaps the party needs to remember those words -N.K. SINGH.

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Love Lost

T was an affair tailor-made to create a furore. A well-known politician, a teenaged daughter of a socialite, and clandestine trysts with the mother in hot pursuit. When Aljei, 16, of Delhi's Naval Public School flew to Bhubaneswar on August 10 to be with her lover, Orissa's Janata Dal legislator Tathagata Satpathy, 32, she was courting scandal.

In fact, her scourge followed literally in her wake. Aljei's mother



Moyna Singh, a Delhi socialite, flew in and lodged a complaint with the police at Puri accusing Tathagata of abducting a minor. Meanwhile,

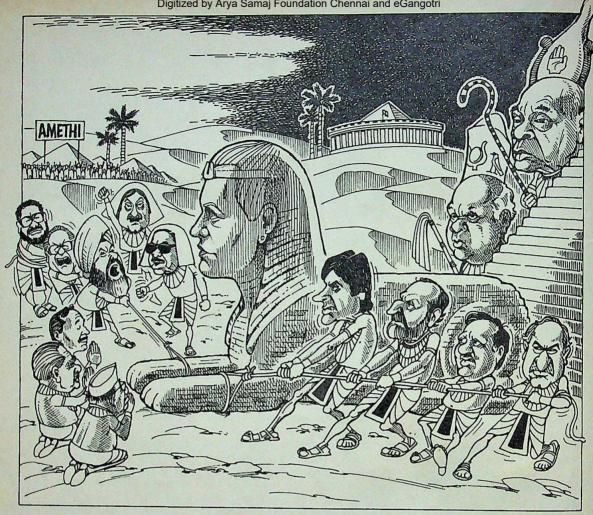
Aljei was on her way to Bhubaneswar to fly out to Bombay. The police however caught up with her, and restored the rebellious Juliet to the anxious mother.

Predictably, the newspapers had a heyday, targeting Tathagata for unsparing criticism. Many papers went to town blaming the young legislator for moral laxity.

The storm has blown over apparently. Tathagata's image is tarnished a bit. But says he: "I am in no way sorry for all the embarrassing exposure." The marriage plans have, of course, been deferred till

Aljei attains adulthood.

-RUBEN BANERIEE



SIGN POSTS

SHOT AT: J.F. Ribeiro, India's ambas-



sador to Romania. The one-time supercop and former governor of Punjab known for his tough tactics, was attacked in Bucharest by a group of Sikh militants, but escaped

without serious injury.

LEFT: Sonia Gandhi, for the US to help son Rahul settle into Harvard. She will return and decide whether to contest the October by-elections in Amethi.

DIED: C. Achutha Menon, 78, CPI leader and former chief minister of Kerala, of a massive heart attack. The veteran leader, whose political career spanned over half a century, was a valiant fighter for social justice, uplift of the poor and an extremely able administrator.

RECOVERING: Legendary leg spinner B.S. Chandrashekhar, from a fracture. The injury to his left leg was the result of an accident caused by a truck that knocked his scooter down in Bangalore city.

PRESENTED: To former prime min-



ister Morarji Desai, the prestigious Bharat Ratna Award. The award, which was announced by the Government in January, was presented to the nonagenarian at his residence in south Bombay by a joint secretary in the Home Ministry on behalf of the Central Government.

APPOINTED: Razia Ismail, as world

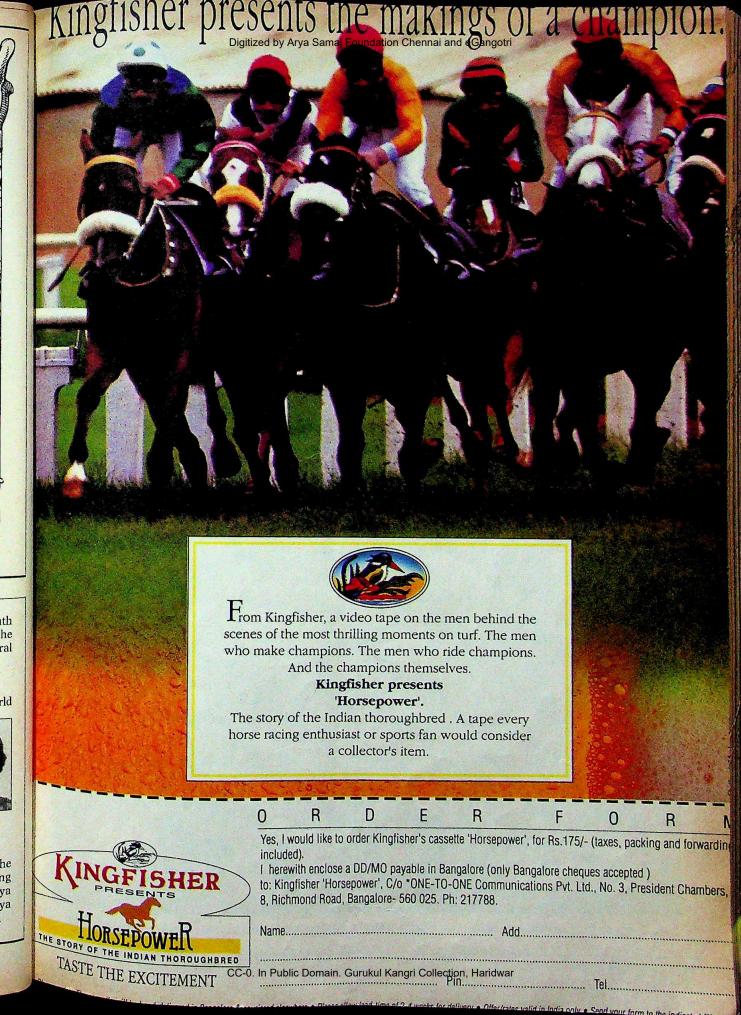
president of the YWCA. The first Asian to head the world's largest women's organisation the former journalist currently heads UNICEF's in-



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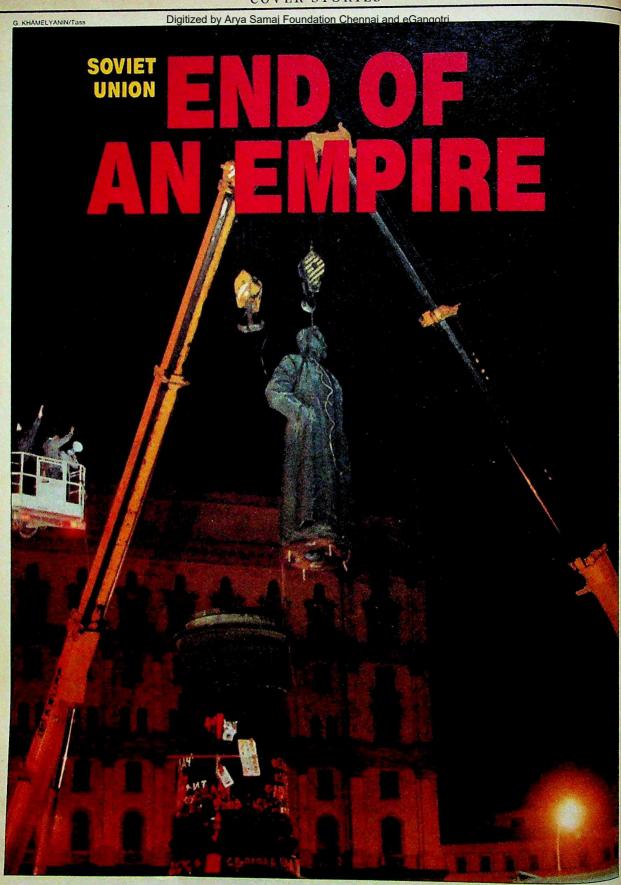
formation service in India.

DIED: Gopinath Mohanty, 78, in the US. Author of over 25 novels, including the masterpiece Paraja, the noted Oriya writer received both the Sahitya Akademi and the Jnanpith awards.



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The uprooting of KGB founder Dzherzhinsky's statue marked the rejection of the system



THERE was a Pigitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri
republics who do not want to stay with the miliar furrow under

the world's most familiar birthmark. The shoulders drooped uncharacteristically. Gone was the bonhomie, the confidence and the trademark repar-

tee. Last fortnight, as he strode into the main hall of the Supreme Soviet, the national Parliament at the Kremlin. Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev was not being himself. Most charitably, he was a pale shadow of the man who had changed the world in five years. But more realistically, here was a man reeling under defeat, a lame-duck President willing to concede

almost anything his critics had been demanding of him for months. All this, less than four days after he and his supporters had defeated the coup against his government.

In the end Gorbachev seemed like a politician who had manoeuvred so hard as to outmanoeuvre himself. Those whom he had installed in powerful positions to placate party conservatives were now in jail or nondescript graveyards after leading the coup against him. Those liberal radicals whom he had despised for being too pro-West, anticommunist and crudely impatient, were now showing him the dotted line. And he was signing on it. The man who had fought so doughtily to defeat the coup and bring him back to Moscow from confinement in his Crimean dacha was now underlining the fact that he had finally won their bitter battle for supremacy. Boris Yeltsin, the president of the Russian Federation, was the new hero and Gorbachev a mere caretaker. At Gorbachev's first public appearance after the coup, at the Russian Federation Parlia-

ment, a stunned Soviet Union watched how the power equation had changed as Yeltsin repeatedly snubbed Gorbachev, "He behaved as a tough schoolteacher would with an errant schoolboy. And it was quite deliberate,"

remarked an old Kremlinologist. Gorbachev's world was crashing all around him just as his nation was unravelling much in the fashion of that familiar Russian mascot, the Matrushka doll. The party and the political system which had helped him, a one-time harvester operator, become arguably the most powerful man in the world world, were a thing of the past. As was the Union. "Let's sign the line." the Union Treaty first and then we will hold negotiations with

USSR. There is no question of keeping any unwilling republic in the Union," he told the Supreme Soviet which assembled under the grave shadow of secession by Ukraine and Byelorussia, the two republics without which a powerful Soviet Union may be inconceivable and the virtual recognition of the three Baltic states' independence by the western world.

As if on cue, secessionist moves came from hitherto unaffected republics. Uzbekistan acted first, taking over the command of army and KGB units. Kirghizia followed suit and with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldavia already half-way

there, the disintegration of the Union seemed irreversible. Trapped in contradictions of his own making. Gorbachev threatened to resign as President unless the Soviet Union maintained a semblance of unity. But if the September 15 referendum in Ukraine sanctifies the separation of the Soviet Union's bread basket, it will seal Gorbachev's fate.

Predictably. break-up of the Union was accompanied by the destruction of the party which had consolidated on centuries of Tsarist conquests. Gorbachev announced the disbanding of the CPSU Central Committee, resigned as gensecretary nationalised party properties. Moscow and Leningrad saw scenes unimaginable to even the most rabid communist-baiters with the defiling of statues of party heroes and stoning of party offices.

Like the 10 days that shook the world in October 1917, it was another revolution except that it took just seven days to change the political and territorial geography of the Soviet Union. Suddenly the world realised it

had a new country to deal with. John Kohan, chief of Time bureau, summed it up: "After three years here, I suddenly feel I am starting a new assignment in a new country.'

On present reckoning this new Soviet Union could end up being close to half its original size (see map), diminished even more considerably in its sway over world affairs. Yet it will continue to be at least a unidimensional superpower with headed but utterly Eurocentric leader who will make the new Soviet Union insular, in keeping with the current mood.



A triumphant Boris Yeltsin holds centrestage

thousands of warheads buried in the vast Russian expanse. Its role in the world will be determined by the personality of its new hero. Yeltsin. Diplomats describe him as a tough, hardMap by B.K. SHARMA

Yeltsin's arrival in power should help the Russians sort out their transcontinental dilemma, of whether they are an Asian or a European power. Dmitiri Fyodorov, a history professor at Moscow University echoes the thought: "We believe we should not be frittering away all our resources and energies trying to fight the first world or run the Third World. We should introspect, work hard and join the European community as that is where we belong." A total reversal from the theme of the International, but that is the mood in post-putsch Russia. Yeltsin has so far found very little time to even meet leaders and diplomats from Asian and African countries and the same attitude is reflected in his record of foreign travel. So centripetal is the mood that Yeltsin's advisers display an almost nonchalant attitude to the secessionist mood. Young Russian Vice-President and rising political star Alexander Rudskoi even dismisses secessionist moves as "last efforts by communist parties in the republics to preserve their privileges by breaking away and keeping their power".

Apprehensions are already being expressed in the non-Russian republics who wish to stay on in the Union, that Yeltsin's Russia may be overbearing and excessively dominating. Tadzhikistan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who played a key role in suppressing the coup and who is now acknowledged to be the third most important leader in the country, is openly echoing these concerns. "I hope in the new Union's constitution they will leave the post of vice-president for the central Asian republics, since the President and the prime minister will perhaps always be from Russia," he

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and Gangotri Today. Analysts also point out that while Yeltsin and his supporters take an extremely liberal view of secessionist clamour among outer republics, they take a tough line on such tendencies within the Russian Federation "Yeltsin's first test will be the demand for a sovereign Tatarastan. That will be a tough one," says a diplomat.

> LSO, not everyone in Moscow agrees that the last has been heard of communism. "Right now," said a deputy. talking to newsmen waiting outside the Supreme Soviet, "the partymen are stunned by the combined impact of the shame of the coup. But soon they will think again." And when they do, they will realise that they are not a totally spent force. The party still has 14 million members and even if halfor them walked out, the rest could reorganise themselves. Saysa senior diplomat: "It is inconceivable that such a big party will be willing to write itself off. There is bound to be a backlash."

> While the Russian youth may not have time for communism, the ideology still commands the backing of old faithfuls. particularly veterans of the great patriotic war. On the streets as youngsters congregate to defile the statues of communist heroes, many old-timers sit with saddened faces, recalling with pride the achievements of the party. "Could we ever have beaten the West in space and nuclear science without the driving force of communism?" asks Vladimir Filitov, an army major and member of the Moscow unit of the party.

> Analysts say Yeltsin and his people have made fundamental errors which could actually make a reaction possible.

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LITHUANIA U.S.S.R. Population: 3.7 mil. Population: 2.7 mil. Population: 1.6 mil. (33% Russian). Makes 50% 01 mopeds, Industrial hub of consumer (28% Russians) goods, ship building & 95% of shale oil. electronics. 35% washing machines. Has Tallinn port. Population: 10.1 mil Fertilisers 50%. Major MOLDAVIA exporter of consumer Population: 4.2 mil. goods Major centre for machine MOSCOW tools, tobacco & grapes. Big exporter. GEORGIA KAZAKHSTAN Population: 5.3 mil. Tea & citrus fruits (95%) Population: 51.7 mil Population: 16.5 mil ARMENIA 21% Russians) (41% Russians) Population: 3.5 mil Sugar 60%, corn 56% 2nd. largest republic. Major gold & copper wheat 25%, iron ore 50% Wheat 30%, power 15%, supplier. Exports coal 30%, meat 25%. coal 20%, wool 30%. computers. **AZERBAIJAN** Alma-A Population: 6.9 mil Caspian Oil equipment 70%, major 1 cotton grower. Declared Independence Population: 3.5 mil Population: 19.6 mil Proclaimed Sovereignty Rich in coal & sulphur. Cotton 75%; exports

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A CHUMICHEV/Tass





The equation between the country's two most powerful men has changed radically. At the Russian Parliament, a stunned country watched Yeltsin snub Gorbachev, as a teacher would an errant schoolboy.



- Economic inter-dependence
- Russian population in other states
- Defence of republics

RUSSIA

Population: 147.7 mil Largest republic, 52% of pop. Oil 90%, wheat 50%, textiles 50%, minerals 75%, key defence units. Problem of port.

KIRGHIZIA

Population: 5 mil 3% Uzbeks)

Population: 4.2 mil (26% Russians). World's third largest wool producer.

> Figures are a % of total production Source: USSR Yearbook

There was no need, for example, to ban the publication of the party newspapers. Yeltsin has to realise that in a multi-party system communists should also have a place. But he seems bent on driving them underground. Sympathisers of the party also feel Gorbachev may be able to stage a comeback of sorts since he is still the only leader respected across the borders of republics that may opt to stay within the new Union and the only one communists as well as the new radicals may accept.

Says Eric Komarov, professor at the Institute of Oriental Studies: "Gorbachev is still the only leader who can unify whatever can still be unified." Even Yeltsin has to acknowledge that if Gorbachev had not loosened things up in five years, the tanks would not have turned turrets at the steps of the Russian Parliament. Asks Komarov: "If Gorbachev had not brought about sovereignisation, would Yeltsin have been able to pass those decrees and command the army's support?"

There are already signs that after the initial euphoria the Russians may realise that they still have uses for Gorbachev. Kremlin-watchers say Gorbachev himself is trying to project the image of a political elder rather than a powerful leader and that could be his tack in the build-up for the presidential election which may take place within months. Whether Gorbachev wins will depend entirely on what Yeltsin's plans are. He may just decide to stay on in Russia where the real power and visibility lies, leaving Gorbachev to head what will at best be a loose, ceremonial federation. But wherever Gorbachev is by next summer, he will still be internationally the best known and respected Soviet leader. Once new moves begin to establish at least umbilical economic and strategic links between the new republics—even a NATO-like alliance is being talked about-Gorbachev could emerge as a fatherfigure and the binding force the new Soviet Union will need. The world too may need him to lead the arms limitation process to its logical conclusion. Gorbachev could continue to play a crucial role on the international stage, personifying the central Asian saying he is so fond of quoting: "The wind blows, the dogs bark, the caravan moves on.'

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

MOOD IN WWe have a new country now"

Text: SHEKHAR GUPTA and Photographs: BHAWAN SINGH

T'S all very confusing even for a wise old man of 86 Russian winters and veteran of two great wars and a tumultuous revolution. Yuri Razumovsky sits uncomfortably on the pavement facing the Kremlin staring at the blue-white-andred flag of Tsarist Russia fluttering from the formidable palecoloured Kremlin building, sandwiched between ramparts flying the red Soviet flag. Many decades ago in the first flush of revolutionary fervour, Yuri remembers, he had accompanied his coal-miner father to workers' meetings where participants would take down the Russian flag and ritually cut away the blue and the white, symbolising the arrival of a new ideology and a new national identity. Now it was all history.

History was also being made last week at the Vagankovsky cemetery in the heart of Moscow, mostly reserved for the Soviet war heroes. As thousands filed past the bodies of the three latest heroes, crushed under a tank in front of the Russian Parliament building, a large percentage of mourners

were clearly soldiers. Many of them in full ceremonial uniforms and with tears in their eyes marking perhaps the first occasion when the ruthless Red Army had mourned people it had killed. The fact is, it wasn't the Red Army any more.

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Alexander Ovsjonnikov, 22, turned up in a tank commander's black, his regiment's insignia emblazoned on his chest. He had commanded one of the platoons sent to overwhelm Boris Yeltsin and his band of defenders at the Russian Parliament. "From the onset I knew none of us was going to fire. From now on the Soviét Army will have no rolein politics," said Ovsjonnikov, making his loyalties clear. "Gorbachev was only a promise that failed. Perestroika is passe. We have a new country now."

Not everyone is as composed. Standing next to the bodies. Volodya Vinogzado, 23, repeatedly bursts into tears. A parachute regiment sergeant, he was trained to be tough. But he has seen too much death. Vinogzado is a veteran of Afghanistan, having fought bitter skirmishes with the Mujahedin at Kabul, Khost and Jalalabad. "All that killing,



Most of those who paid homage to the three heroes killed by a tank were soldiers

destruction, was all a mistake. If we Digitized by Arya had democracy I wouldn't have become a killer at 18," he says and three other soldiers nod.

Each one is an Afghanistan veteran. Alexandro Mongoyev was under siege in Herat; Alexander Shupakov fought a bitter summer to keep convoys moving through the Salang Pass, Kabul's lifeline. They all hate war. They all hate communism. And none of them was ever going to fire at fellow Russians.

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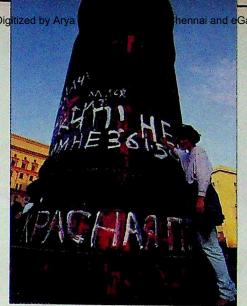
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When the history of the putsch is written, considerable effort will have to be made in analysing what role the "Afghanistan Army's conscience" played in shaping the destiny of the new Russia. The semihippie type who threw the Molotov cocktail to burn the first tank at the steps of the Russian Parliament was an Afghanistan veteran. So were a majority of the guitar-waving youngsters who set up the "rockagainst-terror" show at the 24-storey Parliament, or the "White House". Many still remain there. Long hair, psychedelic dresses. Reminders of an era gone by in the West. If Vietnam gave America its



"They killed my grandfather. We must bury communism so it never terrorises the world." MARIYA SMIRNOVA, 15, student

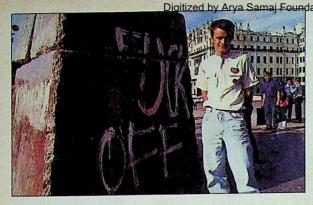
hennai and e Gangotri hippies, Afghanistan has given Russia its "Afghantsys". Many now strut about in uniforms gifted by soldiers, or gas masks and ammunition boxes. Konstantin Alekeyef sporting a head-band, obviously cut out from a soldier's shirt, displays a 'V' sign and a gas mask, and says: "Soldiers told us, after Afghanistan they have no stomach for fighting political battles. They won this battle by turning the turrets away." It is no coincidence that the Yeltsin loyalist in charge of the defence of the "White House" who so bravely rallied the handful of volunteers at his command was none else than Major-General Vadim Bakatin, a former commander of Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Bakatin now wryly recalls how former general secretary Chernenko stressed the need for each Russian youth to do duty in Afghanistan to imbibe true socialist fervour.

> Chernenko would have been outraged by today's Moscow, seized as it is by fervour of an entirely different kind. The epicentre of it all is the Dzherzhinsky Square in downtown Moscow where for years the 20tonne statue of the founder of Cheka

> > G.KHAMEL YANIN/Tass



As the army got carried away by euphoria, tanks did not deter people



"We hate Sverdlov for he killed the Tsar. Maybe he was bad. But communist tsars were worse."

ALEXANDER SYSHEV, 14, student



"I knew none of us would fire. The army will no longer have a political role. We have a new country now."

ALEXANDER OVSJONNIKOV, 22, tank commander



"Take these rocks. Throw them at your Indian communists and kick them out. You know, communists prosper where people live badly."

DAVID LYANOV, 34, a blue-blooded Russian

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and a Gangottias stood, symbolising the power and ruthlessness of Stalinism. Last fortnight, even as KGB officers peered down the windows of their headquarters overlooking the square, the statue was removed with giant cranes, kicked defiled and then carted away. Now the pedestal, smaller by the day as hundreds chip at its sides to take away pieces as mementoes, has become the hang-out of the liberals. Some sing, play the guitar, hold impromptu discussions and young lovers come here to hug and kiss. "If New York has its Greenwich Village and Paris its Montmartre Hill, Moscow now has Dzherzhinsky Square," says a young American diplomat with a video camera, enjoying himself.

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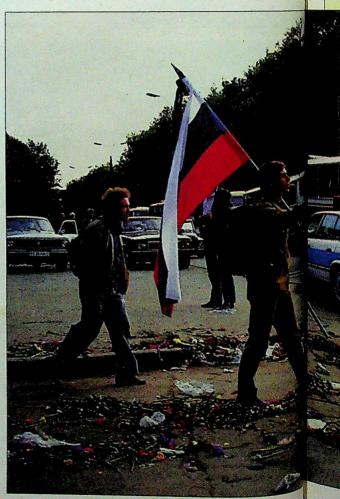
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FTER all, can there be a better pulpit for ideological iconoclasm than Dzherzhinsky Square, which represented the worst Stalinist terror and purges. Mariva Smirnova, 15, stands on her toes to reach out with her key to inscribe her own views of Dzherzhinsky on the pedestal: "Humbug. Stupid goat. Murderer. Fool. Kulak." She has reason to be angry. "They killed my grandfather. They killed someone from each family. We should bury communism so deep now it will never terrorise the world." And David Lyanov. 34, looks up, taking a moment's break from his pursuit of cutting souvenirs with his chisel and hammer to shout: "Take these rocks. Throw them at your Indian communists and kick them out. Or you will be the same as us. Don't you know, communists prosper where people live badly?" Lyanov is no

Waving Russian flags Muscovites celebrated



INDO-SOVIET TIES

Cooling of an Affair

TTUATED in the heart of Moscow's academic district is a proud Indian enclave, the Indira Gandhi Prospekt. A statue of Mahatma Gandhi faces that of Indira. Muscovites say these must be the only monuments to foreign, non-communist statesmen in their city. But now,

like much else in the Soviet Union, this special relationship with India could be a thing of the past.

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In the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the Indian Embassy and Asian think-tanks, the consensus is that the relations were going to change a great deal. As an analyst says: "The most special thing about the relationship was its ideological underpinning. A shared alliance against western imperialism. Now the ideology is gone." Soviet officials also clearly state that the balmy days are over and the Indo-Soviet treaty, renewed just a few weeks ago, is a mere ceremonial document.

But in the hearts of the Communist Party old guard, India had a special place. Sources recall how the former coal and energy ministers, both formidable communists. stood by India in spite of the kidnapping and murder of a Soviet engineer in Assam. Practically all the coup leaders

were soft on India, but the new Cabinet may be less considerate.

And ignoring Boris Yeltsin all these years might now prove to be costly for the Indian policy-makers. Neither any major Indian leader nor any senior embassy functionary has ever met Yeltsin. He too has shown scant interest in India. There has been a belated bid to plug this loophole. Last fortnight Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao sent a congratulatory letter to Yeltsin. Says Indian Ambassador Alfred Gonsalves: "Things have changed a great deal. We are learning to change too."

Ideological upheaval and emer-

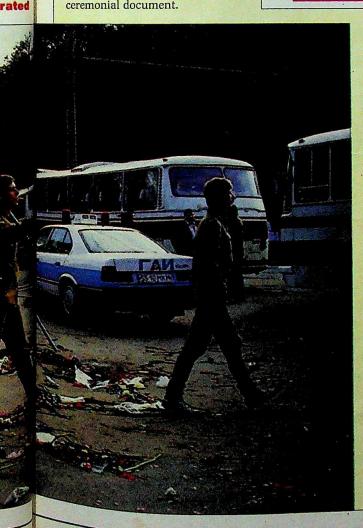
gence of unfamiliar leaders are not the only problems India faces. The collapse of the centralised system will prove to be particularly problematic for trade and defence purchases. Analysts say India will have to learn to deal with autonomous companies controlling the most important armament plants and leaders of the new, independent or semi-independent republics. This may prove to be difficult. Till the '70s India had immense goodwill in central Asian republics. But for nearly a decade the region, ethnically and geographically close to Kashmir, has been ignored. On the other hand, the Pakistanis have been working extremely hard, inviting sundry muftis on junkets and establishing a foothold.

The immediate problem is defence supplies. Diplomats recall how, in the past, each armament sale to India was cleared, directly by the politburo and on priority basis. Today all that-preferential treatment, soft credit, rupee payments-is gone. Another acute problem is crude oil. India used to get Soviet crude through a complicated process. Iraq owed the Soviet Union lots of money and repaid it in terms of crude. The Soviet Union transferred that crude to India. Ever since the embargo on Iraq the Soviets have managed to fulfil their commitment of 4.5 million tonnes of crude per year to India. With the country falling apart and oil production declining, this is now becoming increasingly difficult.

Then there is the restructuring of the rupee-rouble trade arrangement. There is an immediate irritant here: the Soviets owe India Rs 1,000 crore as they have overdrawn on their credit facility on trade in the past year and are unable to pay just when India is so strapped for cash. But the biggest challenge is for the Indian diplomats, who have to undo the damage done by South Block's waffling immediately after the coup. That in itself is a tall -SHEKHAR GUPTA in Moscow

himself has shown scant interest in India, having ignored him all these years may now prove to be costly for the Indian policy-makers.

Even though Yeltsin



rebellious Lithuanian or Ukrainian. He is a blue-blooded Russian from north Osetia.

So is Alexander Syshev, just 14 and holding court at the wrecked pedestal on which stood the statue of Lenin's friend Yakov Sverdlov, Abuse in Russian is written all over and quite obviously for the benefit of the western media there is also a 'f., k off', "We hate Sverdlov for he killed Tsar Nikolai II. The Tsar may have been bad. But communist party's tsars were worse," he says and many in the crowd applaud. Just a couple of hundred yards away is the statue of Marx, in the very heart of Moscow. The impressive monolith is defaced with paint and graffiti that reads, in Russian: "Please forgive me."

It is still a miracle how Lenin's giant statue at the October Square survived the almost cathartic anti-communist onslaught in the week after the failed coup. Each day scores of news photographers hung out at the square, hoping that the statue would be removed.

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But though some people came and threw things at it the cranes never appeared, probably following the appeal of the Russian Government not to destroy the monuments. But an unusual event occurred last Tuesday just as the sun was setting and the cameramen were settling down for their nightly vigil. A middle-aged woman parked her car, its back loaded with flowers, picked up a bouquet and walked to the monument. And before anyone could realise what was happening she placed the bouquet at the statue's feet, bowed in respect and walked back, fighting tears. A fight broke out as the crowd jostled her, shouting abuse but Galina Levidovna, a worker at a cooperative, was unrepentant: "How can you all forget what Lenin has done for us? How can Russians be so ungrateful?" The lone policeman intervened to restore order. But with that single act of defiance the woman had underlined the polarisation and conflict that could mark the future history of Soviet Union.

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INDIAN REACTION

Faux Pas

HILE thousands of Soviet citizens stood up to the tanks that trundled through the streets of Moscow and Leningrad, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao wagged an aging finger at the man they were rooting for. Because the coup, he said, was a clear warning to all those—meaning Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev—who pushed too hard for change.

His officials went a step further. A note was quickly drafted, and as quickly shredded, within the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) predicting a new dawn for Indo-

Soviet trade. The bilateral trade was adversely affected. Payments from bankrupt republics were delayed, and there were fears they would not sell non-ferrous metals under the rupee-rouble trade.

India's interests, or so the MEA was told, lay in the emergence of a unified USSR, even with a hardline leadership. India's vaunted and vociferous upholding of the democratic order—the bedrock of its international image—was sacrificed at the altar of commercial interests. Yet, India had to adjust this stand to its own nascent liberalisation. So MEA officials, as always, took a 'cautious stand.' The rationale: India is a marginal

India's image took a knock when it half-welcomed the coup.

world power, but it wants to protect its righteousness as well as its interests. It condemns an event only when it is wrong on both counts.

So while the rest of the world, except Libya, Iraq and Cuba, spoke up, India dithered. As former foreign secretary A.P. Venkateswaran says, the country has never had a foreign policy based on consensus. Only a series of pronouncements reflecting the worldview of the reigning prime minister. These now reflect no more than the concerns of the party in power.

The PMO is trying to recover from the embarrassment. Says a close aide: "The prime minister's statement was just an effort to strengthen Union Finance Minister Manmohan

Singh's position with the IMF. It was a veiled warning to them of the dangers of pushing India too hard." His aides insist that if Narasimha Rao erred it was on the side of caution. Shortly after the coup was announced, Delhi received a plea from acting President G.I. Yanayev to send a message of support. India, thankfully, did not.

The MEA, in turn, is only too willing to lay the blame for the fumble at the PMO'S door, especially on Narasimha Rao's Principal Secretary Amarnath Verma. As a senior MEA official puts it: "This is what happens when institutions are destroyed."

-SHAHNAZ ANKLESARIA AIYAR

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri leaders to flee. For Congress (I) veteran Vasant Sathe, it proved

Indulging in Doublespeak

India's main left party is assailed

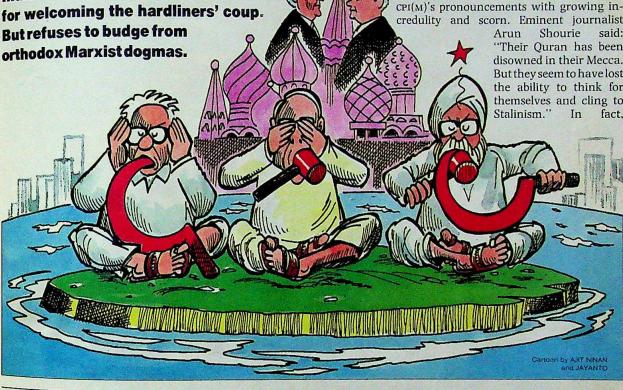
that "people valued freedom more than bread". Not for the CPI(M). According to P. Govindan Pillai, ideologue: "The resistance to the coup was merely a figment of the media's imagination. Apart from the neo-rich and neo-elitist, none resisted the coup. It crumbled because of its own weaknesses.'

Then when Yeltsin, backed lamely by Gorbachev, passed a decree in the Russian Parliament banning the party's activities in Russia, the cpi(M) leaders decried it as "an authoritarian

action". Surject even accused them of 'butchering democracy in the Soviet Union'.

Political commentators watched the CPI(M)'s pronouncements with growing incredulity and scorn. Eminent journalist

Shourie "Their Ouran has been disowned in their Mecca. But they seem to have lost the ability to think for themselves and cling to



By RAJ CHENGAPPA

T'S detractors had always accused it of being Janus-faced. Its recent record of contradictions has given it a reputation for doublespeak, dubious political alliances and ideological compromises. And its head-in-the-sand stance over the cataclysmic changes sweeping the world communist movement has seen it being labelled as "mental slaves of Stalin".

Last fortnight, as the Soviet drama unfolded the CPI(M) seemed to live up to the charges levelled by its opponents. Typically, while the party professes to champion democracy in India, when Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was undemocratically ousted in a hardliners coup, the party saw it as "a positive development". Harkishan Singh Surject, the CPI(M)'s senior politburo member, even lashed out at Gorbachev "for surrendering to imperialistic forces active in destroying socialism in the Soviet Union".

The CPI(M) watched in disbelief and dismay as the Russian people rallied behind Boris Yeltsin forcing the coup

"Yeltsin, Gorbachev are really butchering

democracy by dissolving the Communist Party."

HARKISHAN SINGH SURJEET CPI(M) politburo member

Stalinism, with its connotations of a highly regimented society ruled ruthlessly by a centralised one-party state, is a charge that the CPI(M) finds increasingly hard to deny.

Surject forcefully asserts that the party is against "authoritarianism, bureaucratisation or forcible collectivism". That the coup leaders may have returned the Soviet Union to such a system is, of course, a different matter. And in Stalin's defence the CPI(M) leader adds: "He may have committed lots of crimes

> "Their **Quran** is disowned in their



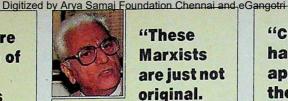
Mecca. But CPI(M) remains a mental slave of Stalinism."

> ARUN SHOURIE **Eminent journalist**

"They are a bunch of wishful thinkers

who live in a world of their own. They can't face reality."

> VASANT SATHE Congress(I) leader



"These Marxists are just not original.

Even in their abuse they have none of the Hindustani galis."

> K.R. MALKANI **BJP** vice-president

"CPM was hasty in approving the coup and rejecting the reforms. It was a bad mistake."

> INDRAJEET GUPTA CPI leader

but he did play a positive role and we are opposed to eradicating his name from history."

The CPI(M) would, however, like Gorbachev to be dumped into the dustbin of history for other reasons. As Prakash Karat, a central committee member and supposedly one of the progressive young turks, explains: "His reforms had gone out of control and were dismantling socialism and fragmenting the Soviet Union." What isn't mentioned is that the reforms were necessitated by the years of economic stagnation and political repression that communism in the Soviet Union had wrought. Party members explain these away as mere "distortions in the system".

Though it may like to repress it, recent events in the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc have badly shaken the party's ideological moorings. Moderate party insiders confess that they are finding it increasingly difficult to explain the alarming developments to its committed cadre.

The party had always brandished the Soviet model as an example of the success of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". But with the Soviet Union rapidly dismantling socialism and moving towards a market economy and

privatisation, party leaders are suddenly finding the rug being pulled from their leaden feet. "Poor chaps," says BJP Vice-President K.R. Malkani, in mock sympathy, "they don't know where they stand now. They are marching up a blind alley. It's time they wrote their memoirs because there are lessons to be learnt from failures."

Of course, the CPI(M) has explanations for the committed. Marxism, their ideologues argue, is a science and develops only on the basis of experience. Any efforts to apply the Soviet model to other countries does not work. In fact, Pillai says: "The events in the Soviet Union will not affect us because it is no longer an exemplar. Not only is Marxism safe but it is also the only deep-rooted idea of development today.

The CPI(M)'s roots too are a problem. Its politburo is dominated by a gerontocracy that swears by classical Marxism. Its main left rival, the CPI, has already decided to stop mouthing such shibboleths as "defeating the running dogs of imperialism". Instead CPI leader Indrajeet Gupta says: "Many concepts of Marxist-Leninist theory have become outdated. We are trying to work out a more flexible approach suited to our country."

HE CPI(M) is reluctant to admit that it is even thinking of changing its dogmas. The result: it now not only faces a crisis of ideology but one of identity too. With almost every Indian political party professing to practise socialism, it is a word much bandied about. That has seen the CPI(M) lose much of its revolutionary thunder.

Nor has it been able to establish a national presence with its base limited to West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala. In the recent elections it tried unsuccessfully to piggyback on the National Front's base in a bid to make inroads into the Hindi heartland. Never mind if the Front was run by the "big bourgeoise". Their rationale: "We support its stand to restore democratic institutions."

There are other contradictions. Like spouting rabid

socialist ideals while operating in a parliamentary democracy. But it gets away because, as Soviet expert Bhabani Sengupta says: "It has the great advantage of not having to practise what it preaches. It can live with the dichotomy and have the luxury of indulging in orthodox views.'

That luxury is fast disappearing. Fortunately for the party, it has of late inducted young blood in the central committee. They are willing to face harsh truths. Young Saifuddin Chowdhury says: "We need to analyse our ideology on questions of democracy, civil liberty, and development.'

If they probe deep enough, they may well be able to pull the iron veil covering only their party's eyes. And it would prevent the CPI(M) from becoming marginalised as has happened to its comrades in many other countries.

CPM'S ABERRANT STANCE

JULY Criticises Mikhail Gorbachev for glasnost and perestroika and weakening of the Soviet Union.

JUNE Defends the crackdown on the pro-1989 democracy movement in Beijing's historic Tiananmen Square.

DECEMBER Blames Gorbachev for the 1989 collapse of communist regimes in Eastern bloc countries.

FEBRUARY Denounces the US-led alli-1991 ance war against Iraq. Accuses Gorbachev of soft-pedalling US military intervention in the Gulf imbroglio.

AUGUST Hails the ouster of Gorbachev by 1991 the party's conservative hardliners. Condemns the radical Boris Yeltsin.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

MURKY INDIAN DEALS



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gh, oull nly uld omapuny The multibillion-dollar banking enterprise which has exploded into the hottest scandal across several continents ruining thousands of investors as its branches shut down had grand designs in India. Along with special reports from New York, Luxembourg, London, Karachi, ANIRUDHYA MITRA and RAHUL PATHAK of India Today's investigative unit unravel the bank's murky operations in this country: currency racketeering, arms deals, drug connections, and the special treatment it gave to and received from powerful politicians, industrialists and bureaucrats.

♦ EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS WITH M.J. HERSHMAN AND A.H. ABEDI



khan sahebs and haan sahebs, so ordered was the chain of command. This structure served the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) a purpose: strict control was crucial in a \$20 bil-

lion (Rs 52,000 crore) empire that spanned over 70 countries and handled operations ranging from money laundering to financing the drug and arms trades. It was done in secrecy, and with a grand design. "The corporate structure was de-

signed to maximise the exploitation of regulatory loopholes," says Verghese Varkki, a financial consultant in Luxembourg, BCCI's base. Now, the empire is in ruins. The picture of BCCI being at the centre of an interna-

tional financial scandal has even paled out the Nomura Securities scam that shot into the limelight a few weeks ago. The US Senate is after BCCI, so is the Bank of England. The emperor under at-

tack is Agha Hasan Abedi, a Pakistani, who built an organisation that was a bank, but was also a haven for the illegal money and secret caches he could handle. This,

Abedi numerous clients ranging from politicans in the US to tinpot dictators in Africa, plus businessmen, politicians and bureaucrats in India.

Despite this web of intrigue and lowdown dealing-laundering drug money

THEY called it the babligitize byby Auffar Santaj Fughadison Cherman and Weangout of Colombia. brokering arms deals in the Gulf—BCCI did have perfectly respectable clients including a number of Fortune 500 companies. In India, the clientele reads like a who's who in business: the Tatas, Birlas, Thapars Chhabrias, and Mahindras.

However, as investiga. tions around the world show, the BCCI's main function was moving money illegally. The same could be said of its operations in India. Records in the bank's Bombay branch have been given over to the State Bank of India for investigation. Only after this will details of illegality emerge, and the names of those involved will be revealed.

THE RACKETS



Fictitious FCNR accounts: Over Rs 27 crore siphoned out. **BCCI** borrowed at low rates and invested at high rates in India. Discovered 150 such accounts.



FTS and havala: The bank was caught issuing foreign exchange against 471 forged passports in league with travel agencies-vast havala operation.



Drug connection: Liased with traffickers to finance hotel projects and construction companies. Helped them bring in money through travellers cheques.



Favouring clients: Wrote off loans, gave special discounts, overdrafts to selected clients after taking security in its foreign branches.

THE PRELUDE

THE year: 1982. A man named Dhirubhai Ambani was getting ready to take on the world, and beat back Indian competitors jealous of his fast-paced Reliance Industries Limited (RIL). While opponents were trying to drive RIL share prices down by selling them off in massive chunks, equally large share purchases by mysterious NRIs were shoring up the prices. Between March and August that year, 17 lakh RIL

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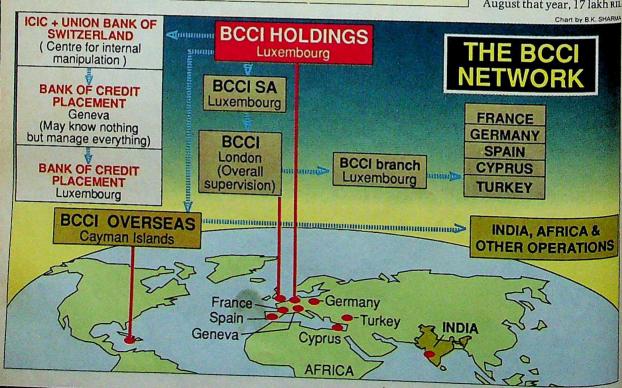
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battle was won by the buyers, and Dhirubhai's market reputation as a tough customer was made.

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HERE were mysteries, right in the middle of the share battle. On August 20.1982, the RBI—under a Union Finance Ministry telex authority-removed the Rs 1-lakh ceiling on NRI investment in Indian companies. Just three days later, three companies registered in the British-administered tax haven of Isle of Man-Thornton. Victor and Gainford—requested the RBI for permission to invest Rs 2.08 crore each in RIL shares. Eight more such companies followed with identical requests. Formed by NRIs, these companies had a paid-up capital of only £200, about Rs 3,000 at 1982 rates. Yet, they wanted to make a combined investment of Rs 22.8 crore in RIL.

But this is a story about the art of the possible. The companies raised the money from the Colombo branch of the European-Asian Bank, a German concern. Another bank had discreetly stepped in to offer surety for these companies: the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

Once the Colombo loan came through, it was transferred back to the BCCI's London branch, from where the funds found their way to the Syndicate Bank's Nariman Point branch in Bombay. The identity of the man who orchestrated this remains unknown.

THE KICKOFF

IN March 1983, BCCI opened a branch in Bombay, against the then RBI governor Manmohan Singh's recommendations. But finance minister Pranab Mukherjee over-ruled him, and the BCCI received preference over other banks-the US-based Chase Manhattan, for instance.

Within three years, the Finance Ministry's enforcement directorate began receiving reports from intelligence agencies about the bank's "indulgence" in "nefarious activities". The directorate then decided to raid BCCI's Bombay branch on July 18, 1986.

The catch: 471 fake passports and a totalof\$2,84,000 in cash and traveller's cheques. The scam—taking \$500 as foreign travel allowance for each passport holder—was worth \$2,35,000. BCCI officials said that Al-Shaya Nasser Travels, a Bombay-based travel agency, had supplied the passports, but as the bank had to verify individual passport holders before arranging foreign exchange, it AGHA HASAN ABEDI

Dangerous Liaisons

NSIDE the sprawling, tree-lined house in Karachi's upmarket Clifton area, lies 69-year-old Agha Hasan Abedi, now confined to his bed and wheelchair. The man, who according to a former executive, could sell deep freezers in the Antarctica and humidifiers in Rangoon, is living on a borrowed heart.

A pale shadow of his feisty self. the drugs he has had to take after the transplant, have taken their toll. A stroke has partially damaged his vocal chords, he stutters, lapses into amnesiac phases and meanders from one disconnected point to another.

But the man, protected by an army of loyalists, is sure of one thing. That he never betrayed anyone and one betrayed him. "My philosophy," he says, "was to build banking on trust." Executives who worked with him confirm that. He operated on three maxims: never say no to anyone, never take no for an answer, and everyone has a price. Even those who were honest could be bought because they had causes which needed to be financed with front foundations or grants.

In Pakistan, say BCCI executives, the bank maintained a 40-strong department whose primary responsibility was to look after "guests": among them, sheikhs who dropped in for shikar. Banking was never discussed. A former executive recalls that even at official conferences metaphysical discussions took precedence over finance. Abedi too prefers to recount his political conquests. Of his friends in India, he says: "Yes, I knew almost everybody." He admits he had ambitions of a vaster BCCI network in India. the country of his birth.

In fact, the man who left Sitapur unnoticed for Pakistan, was feted royally whenever he returned home to India. Fellow Sitapur native Ammar Rizvi, then a minister in the Uttar Pradesh cabinet, squired him around Lucknow every couple of months between 1985 and 1988, opening all doors. He was even put up at Raj Bhavan as a state guest and flown to Sitapur in the state aircraft.

But the man used to chartering his own swanky plane-with a private study, spacious bedrooms, wellequipped bar, a bathroom fashioned out of cut-glass and a carpet so expensive that even Rizvi and gilt-



Abedi: pale shadow of earlier self

edged godman Chandra Swamy were not allowed to walk on itmust have hardly been overwhelmed by such luxury.

The state officials, who at that time were much amused by the goings-on, stopped sniggering when a report on Abedi and the BCCI, sent by the IB to the state, was stolen from the files. The report said Abedi. though a foreign citizen, was trying to buy land in Lucknow. It cautioned the state about the BCCI's rumoured drug connection. The fact that Abedi chose to fraternise with known drug dealers Nasir Ali and Ramesh Chandra Kochar did not help.

A little later, the state authorities wrote back to the ib, confirming the facts. But for reasons very few know, the leads were never followed.

-SHEKHAR GUPTA in Karachi with RAHUL PATHAK

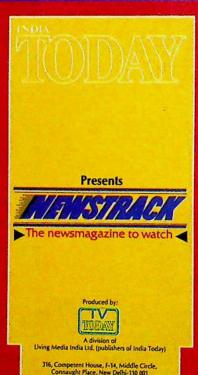
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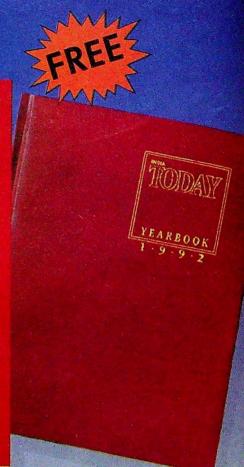
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FOR THE TRUE PICTURE

Bhure Lal, then chief of the enforcement directorate and Vinod Pandey. revenue secretary, led the team that arrested four BCCI officials on January 28. 1987. Krishan Murari, BCCI Bombay's chief executive, fled the country. A red alert was sounded, but it was too late.

Meanwhile, another lead came through on BCCI. Lal had dashed off to New York in end-1986 to meet Pramod Shah, a US-based NRI who held 60 per cent of the RIL shares, on behalf of five of the Isle of Man companies. Shah had agreed to reveal the identity of the person behind the RIL share game, provided his income from these companies was not disclosed to the US Internal Revenue Service. Other Isle of Man owners-based in as far-flung places as Botswana and Sharjah—had also agreed to disclose the identity of the man they were fronting for.

THE FIGHTBACK

THIS is when things began to sour. The then finance minister V.P. Singh had launched his crackdown on industrialists for violating economic laws. The ary 28, 1986. Fairfax Incorporated chief Michael Hershman (see interview) was hired to probe Dhirubhai's foreign links, RIL's machinery imports for its Patalganga petrochemicals plant, and unearth BCCI links, if any.

VEN before the investigation got underway. V.P. Singh was shunted out of the finance portfolio to defence, on January 24, four days before BCCI officials were arrested in Bombay. While his mentor's shift didn't deter Bhure Lal from going ahead with the arrests, he soon discovered that time had run out for him, too. Hershman had told the directorate that an official of E.I. Du Pont de Nemours, the US company which supplied machinery to RIL, would reveal details about RIL underinvoicing the imports by Rs 100 crore, on March 10, 1987. But on March 9, Lal was transferred from the directorate and Vinod Pandey got the axe three months later.

There was more. On April 4, long after Singh and Lal were out of the Finance Ministry, the four arrested BCCI officials were released. This was unusual, as going by the law, the earliest their appeals could have been heard was July 28, 1987, six months after the arrest. On April 17, detention under the ministry's guidance.

That was that. Hershman kept quiet, and the Isle of Man informers withdrew. It was as if a shroud had been drawn over the episode.

THE EVIDENCE

BUT the shroud and the mystery mean nothing. People were removed, but what the schemers forgot to do was remove evidence gathered from enforcement files.

The investigation revealed that BCCI London had actualy instructed the Syndicate Bank to nominate the RIL company secretary, Vinod Ambani, to handle all paperwork on behalf of Victor Investments Limited (VIL) one of the Isle of Man companies. Vinod, Dhirubhai's cousin, was thus buying shares on behalf of a company which ostensibly had nothing to do with Reliance. He supervised the following deals for Victor:

- ▶ On October 22, 1982, VIL paid Rs'20.80 lakh through BCCI London, to buy 16,000 Reliance shares, at Rs 130 each, on November 2.
- ► Another Rs 18.72 lakh was paid in the same way on December 23, from which 14,400 Reliance shares at the same price were bought a day later.

BCCI DONATIONS

Big Game

OVER the years, BCCI made many donations, offered scholarships and granted awards. While its involvement was low-key, the donees were always high-profile.

- The BCCI's London branch donated \$100,000 for the Third World Foundation's Peace Prize in 1982 to the then Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere. Indira Gandhi gave it away in New Delhi.
- The same branch donated \$100,000 for the 1987 Reliance World Cup. The sponsors: Reliance Industries.
- Gave Rs 50 lakh to Golden Hour Project in Bombay. Started in 1985 by Murli Deora, MP, and inaugurated by Sonia Gandhi, the project uses its six ambulances to rush patients to hospital.
 - The Cambridge and Oxford



Association of Delhi received a donation of Rs 50 lakh in 1988. It offers scholarships for higher studies to needy students. Vice-President S.D. Sharma is a trustee.

Officials say examples of such BCCI donations are in "plenty", but they are reluctant to divulge more details-and names. Says an official Mrs Gandhi honouring Nyerere

of State Bank of India which has been appointed provisional liquidators for BCCI's Bombay branch: "Revelation of big names, which include powerful bureaucrats and politicians, might prompt them to hamper our investigation.

dividend of Rs 3.60 lakh from RIL after deduction of 25 per cent tax, which was deposited in VIL's account with BCCI. Colombo for transfer to its account in BCCI London.

▶ On September 14, 1983, VIL paid Rs 41.40 lakh through BCCI London for 18,000 RIL debentures at Rs 230 each.

▶ On January 13, 1984, these debentures were sold at a loss of Rs 83.80 per debenture. An amount of Rs 15.03 lakh in sale proceeds was deposited in VIL's account with BCCI Colombo by RIL.

▶ On January 20, 1984, the entire amount deposited by RIL into VIL accounts was transferred from Colombo to BCCI London.

The evidence suggests a connection between the BCCI and RIL in one of the most controversial transactions in recent times.

SCHEMES AND SCHEMERS

THERE is more to BCC1 than the Isle of Man connection. While it can be said to make money for others, the bank's prime business was making money for itself.

The Foreign Currency Non-resident (FCNR) accounts were a godsend. Under the scheme, any NRI can open foreign currency accounts in India, earn 12 per cent per annum interest, and take the amount-including theinterest-back out in foreign currency. The 12 per cent rate offered by these accounts is about double what a bank can earn by lending to another at the London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR), usually 6 per cent a year.

The BCCI capitalised on this in a simple way: it merely opened fictitious FCNR accounts. The State Bank of India (SBI), appointed provisional liquidators for BCCI's Bombay branch, have already unearthed 150 such accounts. From these, deposits worth Rs 27 crore have been withdrawn over the years.

What BCCI did was borrow money from other banks at the LIBOR rate, and then funnel it into India through these fictitious accounts. Then, it would make a neat 6 per cent profit by claiming 12 per cent interest from the Government of India.

The accounts, say directorate officials, also served another purpose. They were a handy conduit for those Indians who had business dealings abroad. If an

▶ On July 8, 1983, VIL recentiqued by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri

MICHAEL HERSHMAN

"BCCI was used as a criminal enterprise"

MICHAEL Hershman—the man who became a household name in India at the peak of the Bofors probe-has hit the limelight again five years later. And he has some startling information to offer: that the Bofors inquiry was coincidentally called off just after some leads were discovered on the BCCI connection. New York Correspondent AMRIT KAKARIA tracked down the Fairfax chief in Virginia.

Q. When did you learn of Indians connected with BCC1? And how?

A. In late 1986 in New Delhi when I met the Finance Ministry officials who had engaged our services, in particular Bhure Lal, who was the director of the criminal division of the Finance Ministry at that time.

enced, and interceded, to see that BCCI was granted a licence to do business in India.

Q. Bhure Lal did not indicate who influenced Mukherjee?

A. My impression was that it was the BCCI. All I have been told is that there were allegedly some sort of deals between Mukherjee and BCCI officials that convinced him to grant the licence. I am not saying that he got paid off to do that. But I don't believe from what I was told that this was dictated to him. I think he made that decision after he personally met with and spoke with bank officials.

Q. How soon after you were commissioned did you come to know that there was something wrong?

A. It was almost immediately after, because I was given information and files by the finance minister that

During my discussion I raised some points of common interest such investments in havens'' by Shah of New York, role of BCCI, London, and in particular of Mr. Y.D. Padiyar, Louis Dreyfus Corporation, matters pertaining to Ballarpur Group of Industries and Protima Nooruddin Co.

Q. Was BCCI specifically mentioned? A. Yes. In fact, BCCI

was central to many of the investigations he was conducting.

Q. That means, in 1986, a government functionary was aware that there was something wrong going on between BCCI and Indian officials. Or was it with businessmen too?

A. I think it was both. He had questions dating back to the time BCCI was first granted a licence in India. There was a school of thought in India-this is of course what I was being told-that BCCI should never have been granted the licence to do business. But the then finance minister Pranab Mukherjee, in some way influLal's letters to the US Government

showed me the extent of BCCI involvement. We also realised we were not going to get cooperation from BCCI: it wasn't in their best interest. So we began talking about a method for getting the information we needed. There were two plans. One was to try to enlist the support of the US and the British governments in the investigation. The other was to gather enough information on BCCI's wrongdoings in India—to go after them criminally and try and force them to cooperate. That's why Bhure Lal took the action against BCCI in Bombay. The charges weren't important. What was important was to have evidence to support some charges so we

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Q. I minate Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

could seek the cooperation of the BCCI employees being charged.

0. Was this only part of what Bhure Lal wanted you to do or was this

A. No, this was only a part of it.

Q. Why wasn't the investigation completed?

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A. Because the government was not interested in uncovering the corruption within its ranks. If the investigation was allowed to proceed, it would have led to Rajiv Gandhi's doorstep. In fact, I had to use another name—Dr Harris—to get around. The same thing happened with Bofors.

O. Why did V.P. Singh not pursue them. After all, he was in power for over 16 months.

A. V.P. Singh began aggressively, but got tied up in courts and political problems. By then, Fairfax was too controversial to be brought back into the picture as an investigator. That brings me to another point. Late in 1986 or early 1987, Bhure Lal succeeded in arresting several senior BCCI officers and closing its Bombay branch. Abedi flew to New Delhi and met with Rajiv Gandhi. Soon after

that the BCCI operations were reopened and its officers released. Then Rajiv Gandhi issued a strong condemnation of Fairfax and its operations, although it was hired by his own finance minister. Then V.P. Singh was soon eased out of finance. Rajiv Gandhi feared the disclosures and wanted to end the investigation. So, it was the

ecci angle to our investigation that caused the greatest concern to the Gandhi administration and led to the end of our probe. Because once V.P. Singh and Bhure Lal were transferred, there was no one left for us to report to.

Q. Would you like to guess, though Thope you know, as to why the Rajiv Gandhi government had to truncate your investigation?

A. Because BCCI was being used not as a bank but a criminal enterprise.

A. By government officials and Indian businessmen who were seeking to violate or get around not only the bribery statutes in India but also the currency control law.

Q. If Rajiv Gandhi wanted to terminate the investigation into BCCI's dealings, and actually go on to attack the integrity of Fairfax, does it not mean that certain people he wanted to protect were involved in the investigation?

A. He feared disclosure of corrup-



"It was the BCCI angle to our investigation that caused the greatest concern to the Gandhi administration and led to the end of our probe."

tion at the highest levels of the Indian Government, and that's why he cut short our investigation.

Q. Would you, could you, make a connection between BCCI and Bofors?

A. I can't. I simply don't know.

O. For Rajiv to terminate you and risk having this thrown back in his face you must have had something really big.

A. Well, we tied in, for example, BCCI and Reliance Industries of Ambanis. There were serious allegations and serious investigations by the Finance Ministry to indicate that Reliance was paying off high-level officials in the Gandhi administration in order to get favourable treatment regarding certain regulations. And we tied that in to BCCI. As well as tying it into the BCCI stock deal that was perpetrated by Reliance Industries.

Q. Who blew the whistle on you?

A. The BCCI. They saw we were getting too far, so they went to the Gandhi administration. We have a

unique opportunity to pursue wrongdoing in the countries where BCCI was active. We are going to testify before the US Congress in September and we will make the point as strongly and as loudly as it is possible.

Q. You said you were offered bribes twice during the course of the investigation and on both occasions refused them. Who offered you the bribes?

A. On one occasion we were offered a great sum of money to sign a letter saying that during the course of our investigation we found no evidence to conclude that Gandhi or any member of his family was engaged in wrongdoing. We were approached by a Mr Siddiquie from New Delhi and a colleague of his, a Mr Khan from Chicago. The first instance was at the Hilton in London, where I was awakened in the early morning by an Indian,

who never told me his name, but offered me a million dollars to cease the investigation. Otherwise he'd cut me up and throw me into the Thames. Subsequently, Siddiquie met me here in Virginia.

Q. How could the truth be forced to come out?

A. We could have a strong, independent investigation by a bipartisan Parliament, with the

resources and professional staff necessary to conduct the inquiry. If there were people of substance in India who wanted to see an investigation proceed they could conceivably do it with private resources. Because at this point there are enough people, who have worked for BCCI, or were affiliated with the BCCI, who are talking. The groundwork has been laid. But there are other avenues now.

Q. For example?

A. Many government officials and businessmen used BCCI. Those records could be reached now. We know of the existence of some records in BCCI's office in London. When the BCCI found out that we knew of those, they transferred them immediately to their office in Cayman Islands.

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Speech by Dr. Bansi Dhar, Chairman at the Annual General Meeting of the Company held on August 23, 1991 at New Delhi.



DR. BANSI DHAR

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you all a very warm welcome to this Annual General Meeting of your Company.

The Directors' Report and the Audited Accounts of the Company for the period ending 31st March, 1991 have been with you for sometime and, with your permission, I will take them as read.

Pursuant to the approval by the Delhi High Court of the Scheme of Arrangement for DCM Ltd., your company comprises of Daurala Sugar Works, Shriram Rayons and Hindon River Mills. This was the first year of operations after the restructuring and we have achieved satisfactory results. Consequently, your Directors have pleasure in recommending a dividend of 20%. I am confident that in the years to come, your investments in this Company will continue to appreciate.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DCM Shriram Industries being a new company, one of the first steps we took after restructuring was to strengthen the Board of Directors with the induction of eminent people with vast business and financial acumen. I am sure that your Company will benefit greatly by their experience.

One of our directors, Shri Om Prakash, unfortunately passed away recently. He lent his wide experience and maturity to the operations of the Company, and we shall miss his wise counsel and advice.

NATIONAL SCENE

During the past two years, the country has passed through a period of political instability and economic decline. The unfortunate and dastardly assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi earlier this year was a severe blow to the nation. Rajiv Gandhi's vision of a modern and vibrant India remains to be fulfilled, and I am confident that the people of this country will continue to strive to achieve this goal in the forseeable future.

We are today at the crossroads and it is important for all of us to forget our differences and work for the common interest of the country. It is also important that leaders from all walks of life arrive at a consensus on major economic issues rather than taking narrow parochial stands, so that the Nation can once again progress in the face of global competition.

In trying to find the right path, we could do well to learn from the recent transformations taking place in Russia and Eastern Europe, which confirms that a market led economy is in the larger interest of the country. Political will and courage of the highest order is required to give shape and implement pragmatic policies which are the need of the hour. A silver lining is the fact that the Indian economy and its people have, from time to time, demonstrated remarkable resilience and strength in face of adversity.

The Govt, is displaying sagacity and maturity in dealing with the problems and has already taken some bold steps to bring back the economy on the rails. The new Industrial Policy and the measures in the recently announced Budget are intended to remove some of the structural imbalances. These need to be followed up and accomplished quickly. One hopes that the process of unshakling the industry from the "Permit Raj" will continue.

Some measures that could help to overcome the problems and accelerate economic growth are:

- (i) The progress that the country has made is being eroded by population explosion. The resultant tensions are leading to a deterioration in law and order situation. There is an urgent need to evolve a long term POPULATION POLICY which would arrest the growth in numbers and help improve the quality of life of the common man.
- (ii) We cannot achieve a significant increase in exports in each and every industry sector in a short period of time. With an approach of selectivity under which a filip is given to selected thrust areas, the country could earn valuable foreign exchange rapidly. India is endowed with vast agricultural potential, natural and mineral resources and good technical and managerial manpower. These could be mobilised for rapid growth of exports. This will also create new employment opportunities.
- (iii) Industrial development is a key to economic growth of the nation. The developmental institutions have to ensure adequate and timely availability of finances. Some recent reports about tightening of debt: equity ratio and promoter contribution norms are disturbing. Instead of encouraging growth, such steps will only retard it. If these steps are taken due to scarcity of funds with the developmental institutions, it may be desirable that these institutions divest their substantial holdings in the equity of various private sector companies.

OPERATIONS

Friends, you would naturally be interested in knowing the plans of the company. The units have been in operation for decades and it will be our endeavour to utilise their inherent strength, goodwill and reputation to achieve growth through expansion, technology upgradation and diversification.

Daurala Sugar Works is the oldest operating unit of the undivided DCM Ltd. The plant was set up in 1932 but in spite of its age, it is today one of the most modern plants in the country with a crushing capacity of 5800 TPD. We have applied to the Govt. for expansion of the capacity to 8000 TPD.

At Daurala, we also produce alcohols and a range of fine chemicals and drug intermediates. This complex is the nucleus around which we are pursuing growth in these fields. Work is in hand on a drug intermediate project. It is proposed to implement this through a new company, Daurala Organics Limited. Commercial production is expected to commence by the end of 1992.

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Shriram Rayons, the second unit in our fold, was started in 1965. The demand for rayon tyre cord has been declining over the years. Your management has put in concerted efforts to identify pockets where Rayon Tyre Cord can still be used. We have been successful in developing markets abroad and the unit has been able to improve exports in the face of international competition.

This may be a short-lived market. We are therefore endeavouring to look at other areas where we can take some synergy advantage for furture growth. Towards this end, we are actively pursuing a Nylon Tyre Cord project which will utilise part of the infrastructure already available. Necessary Government clearances have already been obtained. In order to make use of surplus viscose capacity, we are also looking at the possibility of manufacturing Rayon Filament Yarn.

The third unit, Hindon River Mills was established in 1972. After restructuring, our efforts to upgrade the plant and marketing operations have begun to show results. I am glad to inform you that we are now able to export yarn once again. Much more needs to be done to further improve the performance which will include replacement of some machinery with more modern ones.

The new policy initiatives taken by the Govt. will open up new opportunities in the face of international competition. Businesses will have to optimise the utilisation of resources, improve quality, bring down costs and endeavour towards fuller utilisation of human potential. In such an era, investment decisions and the quality of management would be crucial to the success of any business. I would like to assure you that your Management is fully alive to these vital issues.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Before concluding, I would like to convey my sincere thanks and gratitude to my colleagues across the company for their dedicated efforts, the Financial Institutions and our Bankers for their whole-hearted and unstinted cooperation even in the most difficult of times, the Govt. of India and the State Govts. of U.P. and Rajasthan for their guidance and support.

I finally extend to you, dear Shareholders, my sincere and heartfelt gratitude for your continued confidence and encouragement.

N.B. This does not purport to be a record of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting.



Sugar • Tyre Cord • Textiles • Yarn • Alcohols • Chemicals
DAURALA SUGAR WORKS • SHRIRAM RAYONS • HINDON RIVER MILLS

Indian client of the bank wanted had first brought the bank to their Indian money abroad he would merely pay cash to the bank. And BCCI would pay the person abroad, by showing that an NRI had merely withdrawn his FCNR money. The bank ended up making money in two ways: through the FCNR deposit, and by charging the person here a premium for making foreign currency available to him.

There is something else the BCCI practised. An RBI inspection of BCCI Bombay conducted last year found that vouchers amounting to Rs 10 crore had not been mentioned either in the ledgers or in the daily records book. The RBI suggested that these vouchers were issued against uncrossed "order-drafts", which according to the bank, must have carried "illegal money".

DRUGS, GUNS

REPEATEDLY, this "illegal money" has been reported to be "drug money", not only by Indian intelligence agencies, but also those from abroad, such as the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Even while BCCI chief Abedi was making trips to Lucknow, the Intelligence Bureau had sent messages to Uttar Pradesh sleuths, mentioning that Abedi was openly liaising with two people known to be involved with the international drug trade: Nasir Ali of Shahja-

hanpur and Ramesh Chandra Kochar of Delhi. Both these men have been detained in connection with heroin smuggling.

In August 1988, the Narcotics Control Bureau had reported to the department of revenue that drug money was coming into fictitious accounts at BCCI Bombay. Nothing was done.

That was not all. BCCI, according to reports, had close links with Karachibased Habib Bank, where Abedi had once worked. The DEA had told its counterparts in India that the Karachi bank had funded the purchase of arms for Afghan guerrillas.

Things began to fall in place. Authorities recalled an old case which notice. An investigation by the enforcement directorate and the CBI in 1983 revealed how BCCI London funded the caper in which fifty thousand .303 rifles were exported by the Department of Defence Production to a British firm, Qaid International. The guns had actually found their way into the hands of Punjab extremists and the

What is not known is that the Indian agent in the deal, Uranus Agencies Private Limited, had taken a loan

of \$5,00,000 from BCCI London in 1982 to pay off the Indian supplier. Then, an agent of the Indian interme-

Afghan Mujahedin.

BCCI Bombay; and (inset) Murari who fled



The Enforcement Directorate of the Finance Ministry learnt about BCCI's activities and raided the Bombay branch in July 1986.

> diary company, was caught at the German-Belgium border with huge amounts of cash by the German authorities for not carrying a proper visa. Heintroduced himself as the "knight of Malta". The Government of India was informed by Interpol that the cash recovered was actually from the sale proceeds of a gun deal, which he was carrying to Belgium.

> Investigations by the Indian agencies revealed that the consignments carrying guns had landed in Pakistan via Lisbon and Los Angeles for distribution among the Afghan and Punjab extremists. The money, confiscated. never found its way back to repay the BCCI and eventually, the loan to the

Indian agent was written off as a baddebt. Typically.

THE FOOTNOTE

TYPICALLY, because BCCI has a habit of writing off loans, usually as bad debts. Directorate officials say that the bank was only too happy to do it, as a service to its clients.

When money stashed abroad had to be brought back to India for an emergency, the Indian party would deposit a chunk of its foreign currency

> holdings to a BCCI branch abroad. And then ask BCCI Bombay for a loan without collateral, which was later written off as a bad debt. It is difficult to identify, say enforcement officials, which loans were givenand written off-in this way, as the transactions appear normal, unless the smi's investigation turns up with something different.

As of now, BCCI Bombay has sanctioned advances of Rs 530 crore, on a deposit base of Rs 380 crore. Of this. Rs 280 crore are in NRI accounts. Lending on such strained reserves. say investigating officials, is indicative of how the bad debt scheme has worked.

When V.P. Singh came back to power in November 1989, it was expected that the BCCI investigations would

be renewed. But government insiders say that it never took off for two reasons. One: the government didn't want a repeat of a Fairfax-type controversy. And two: the Government had found another target for a witchhunt-the Bofors scandal.

With the return of what a BCCI official terms "a friendly government" three months ago, there was a general sense of relief, a feeling that it would now be business as usual. Only, they hadn't counted on an international crackdown which led to BCCI Bombay being closed down on July 6. Now, it's back to worrying. For the bankers, as well as their customers, with all eyes on the outcome of the sprinvestigation.

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Participants

Officers in All India Services and Group 'A' Services of Central and State Governments, Managers in Public & Private Sectors, and decision-makers in family-owned enterprises.

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graduation and also in any one of the examinations held by a Board/University for 10th, 11th or 12th Standard. Age below 35 years. With at least 5 years of work experience.

Duration

Fifteen months: 12 months at the MDI Campus, Gurgaon (near Delhi) and 3 months on project work in the sponsoring organisation. The Programme commences on July 1, 1992.

Selection Procedure

Participants are required to take the Common Admission Test (CAT) of the IIMs, to be held at different centres throughout India on Dec. 8, 1991. A separate advertisement for CAT will appear in national newspapers around Aug. 28 – 30, 1991. CAT bulletins will be available at selected SBI branches from Sept. 3 till Sept. 28, 1991. Last date for receiving filledin CAT application forms at IIMs is Oct. 7, 1991. Selection will be based on our evaluation of your performance in CAT and subsequent interview at MDI.

For NMP application form and prospectus or further details write to the address given below. Last date for receiving filled-in NMP forms at MDI is Nov. 30, 1991.



The Programme Officer

National Management Programme
Management Development Institute

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The Knock of Nemesis

A large chunk of India's black money is stashed in the BCCI branches

By ARUN CHACKO in Luxembourg and London

OME powerful Indians must be spending sleepless nights. The recent closure of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) for banking irregularities undoubtedly hit

tens of thousands of NRIs, mainly in Britain. But it also appears to have finished off numerous Indians resident at home, with massive caches of illegal funds abroad. This hush-money, parked mainly in Luxembourg, London and the Cayman Islands, a Caribbean pleasure spot and tax haven, exceeds \$500 million (Rs 1,300 croreat present exchange rates) even by conservative estimates.

The maximum damage to these funds seems to have been done in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Says a top banking source in this elegant, European tax haven: "Roughly \$400 million belonging to Indian companies, industrialists, politicians and bureaucrats was secreted there."

Since BCCI Luxembourg is in liquidation, account holders would be lucky to get even half their money back, after the adjudicators are through with their number crunching. But it could be a lot less, and there is no saying when depositors will see their money. And since these funds have been dubiously acquired, or banked where they should not be, owners can neither make public claims nor protest. In fact, they are terrified of any inquiry into BCCI accounts, which could publicise names.

BCCI officials in Luxembourg are nottalking, scared of breaking the oath of banking secrecy required by local law, and losing their jobs. More importantly, they are scared of the long arm of the top BCCI management, who appear determined to keep everything under wraps. The situation in London is exactly the same.

Switzerland remains the favourite haven for clandestine wealth abroad, with a majority of Indian funds still there. But bankers in Luxembourg believe that the BCCI's local branch has over a hundred Indian accounts, many

BCCI Luxembourg: a dream shattered



About \$75 million belonging to bureaucrats and politicians is sitting in rarely operated private accounts.

with at least \$5 million each in them. Most of the money belongs to industrialists and businessmen, who have it in active and lucrative side deposits or current accounts. There are supposed to be 10 major clients.

But about \$75 million belonging to bureaucrats, public sector chieftains and politicians is sitting pretty in rarely operated private accounts, accumulating a minimal interest. "Deposits range from half to four million dollars each," says a banker. "These accounts are looking for passive capital protection rather than revenue or capital appreciation."

These private account holders are mostly Indian deal makers—within or

outside the ministries-who have earned money for toplevel introductions, for matching buyers from India and sellers from abroad. purchasing foreign technology or goods. They know the size of the deals, the real cost of the transaction, and the lawthey are in the best position to negotiate. Most of the money represents various commissions or kickbacks. But it can also belong to bureaucrats who have held foreign posts or appointments.

Banking sources say more government servants than politicians appear to be involved. They know the world and are more at home in an international environment. Often, they use these funds to institute bogus scholarships for their children studying abroad, for medical treatment in the best hospitals in the West, or for travel. Only the interest on capital is touched, at the end of a quarter of half year, when these gains can be collected.

Politicians with funds stashed in Luxembourg find the money more useful in India. Soit is looped back through sales of dollars abroad, usually to Indian businessmen, for payment in rupees in India. In cash and no questions asked.

Evidence of substantial subcontinental money in the Grand Duchy is provided by the BCCI'S Luxembourg branch. Of its five account officers, one was exclusively for Indian and Pakistani clients. Even as the operation winds down, at least two Indians remain in extremely critical positions.

The BCCI's corporate and operational structure, its complex web of interrelated companies, ensured by Arya Samaj horizontal and vertical isolation of responsibility and financial flows. Information remained restricted to very limited numbers, even within a particular branch.

In theory, BCCI Holdings Luxembourg was the parent company. In reality, global operations and direction of all BCCI companies was from London.

The two main operational arms for the London headquarters were the Luxembourg BCCI S.A (Societe Anonyme) set up to get bank secrecy as well as fiscal advantages available to investors. This allowed BCCI to have over \$800 million under management for private clients, down to \$670 million at the time of closure. Finally, the BCP S.A. in Geneva used to channel fiduciary deposits to BCP Luxembourg to get better returns, while retaining complete anonymity and fiscal shelter for depositotors.

Accounts and flow of funds of major operations directed from London involved different departments in London, Switzerland, Luxembourg and the Cayman Islands in different stages of movement. No one person could see or imagine the whole operation process.

The London office would mastermind and carry out operations



Politicians with funds stashed away in Luxembourg looped them back to the country through sales of dollars abroad for payment in rupees in India.

through the curtains of bank secrecy in Luxembourg and BCP Geneva. And launder or lose track of the source, nature and value of suspect transactions by then running them through the Cayman Island subsidiary.

It is difficult to quantify amounts lying in the Cayman Islands, which banking sources believe are substantial. But it is well known that most of BCCI's fraud and inter-bank transfers were conducted there because of minimal banking regulation. All poorly regulated operations were run or transferred through the Caymans. It is

Chennal and eGangothen the Cayman Islands tangle is unravelled-if at all it can be-will anyone know what the BCCI is worth today. Banking sources expect it to be a lot less than is currently claimed.

> The Cayman Islands operations called BCCI (Overseas) Limited—helped consolidate the balance sheets of Third World branches basically by cooking the books. Part of the Third World BCCI operation was to give private businesses and individuals from soft currency areas hard currency facilities outside statutory controls. Lack of strict regulatory provisions in the Cavmans allowed dubious transactions and items to be showing net worth or results unacceptable by general bank accounting and reporting norms.

> There is another angle to banking with the BCCI abroad. Surprisingly, residents of India appear to have lost considerable money through the closure of the British operation. The truth is, most south Asian depositors in England had cash-and-carry businesses, which generated handsome profits. Averse to paying taxes, especially the high rates in the UK, they would often deposit the undeclared money in the names of parents, siblings or relatives resident in India.

> Now they are apprehensive of any detailed inquiry into BCCI dealings, and terrified of publication of account holders' names. It is bound to get them into trouble with the local taxman, and penalties are severe. Their relatives in India would also have to face the authorities. It is curious how a majority of 1.2 lakh BCCI account holders in England now refuse to talk about their problem at allthough they have lost substantial sums of money. Perhaps, silence has never been more eloquent.

> A few of the depositors are talking, however, and their stories make poignant reading. For many, like Birmingham-based, former Pakistan cricketer Mushtag Mohammed, the bank collapse represents the end of a lifetime of hard work. Along with his family, he has lost a total of £1,70,000 (Rs 69.7 lakh). Iraqi-born Ali Saad is another who will have to start from scratch. Owner of an advertising agency in London, he lost £1,20,000. Some like M.R. Kundra, owner of a London knitwear firm, have been lucky. Having transferred £800,000 just days before the bank folded up. perhaps he can afford to laugh. It will be a long time, however, before others can laugh again. -With additional

reports by AMRIT DHILLON in London.

THE LYNCHPIN

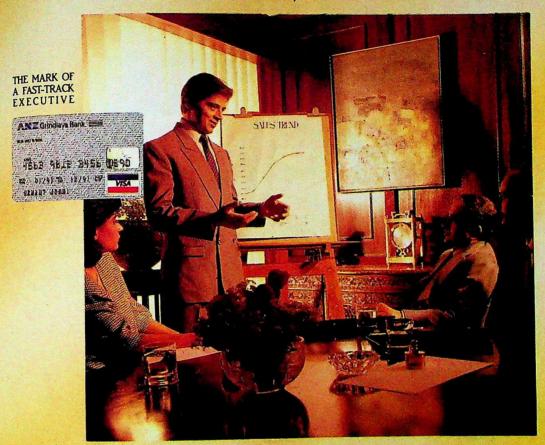
HE BCCI'S Indian clientele with secret accounts is highpowered, and discretion and secrecy were paramount. It would only interact with a handful of the bank's top management in London, from where the whole operation was conducted. How important London was is shown by the fact that the London staff was 600, while parent company BCCI Holdings Luxembourg had only 62.

The lynchpin of the whole operation was an elderly south Indian Brahmin named Y.D. Padiyar. The other top official interacting with the Indians was chief of credit Imtiaz Ahmed. Padiyar was a trusted adviser and friend to BCCI chief Agha Hasan Abedi, and their link goes back to pre-Partition days when they worked for the Habib Bank in Bombay. They always remained in close touch. Padiyar came to BCCI, London, from Habib Bank A.G. Zurich, in the early '70s.

He was so crucial for the BCCI operation here, that despite wanting to retire twice, the bank would not really let him go. Instead of marking attendance at the BCCI's Leadenhall Street headquarters, he was allowed to function from his plush Baker Street home.

Padiyar would work on the phone, without documentation, and get a lot of things done for these powerful Indians. He would also take the Indian hush-money and bank it in a numbered account in BCCI's Luxembourg branch. No one barring the account officer and branch manager would know the identity of the client. Since kickbacks, tax evasion and flight of capital are not considered crimes in Luxembourg, he was not breaking any local law. The element of secrecy that Padiyar adopted is reflected in the fact that hardly anyone, even in BCCI, knew what he was doing.

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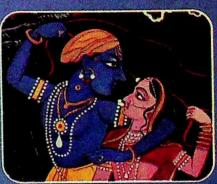
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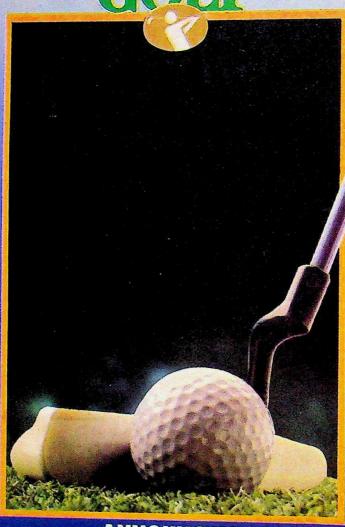
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FIXTURES				
Aug 29-	Wills Southern India Open,	Jan-8-11	Wills Western India Open,	
Sept 1, 1991	Madras	1992	Bombay	
Sept 12-15	Wills Bangalore Open,	feb 19-22	Wills Masters,	
1991	Bangalore	1992	Bombay	
Nov 7-10	Wills Chandigarh Open,	April 2-5	Wills Eastern India Open,	
1991	Chandigarh		Calcutta	
Nov 21-24	Wills Kanpur Open,	April 16-19	Wills Northern India Open,	
1991	Kanpur		Chandigarh	
Dec 12-15	Wills Rajasthan Open,	May 14-17	Wills Meghalaya Open,	
1991	Jaipur		Shillong	
Dec 19-22 1991	Wills Marwar Open Jodhpur	THE	Simong	

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A BRAND OWNED BY ITC LTD. MADE IN INDIA

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HERE is a silver lining on every cloud, or so the saying goes. And one is now up for grabs for cash-starved Indian advertising firms: Air India's Rs 8-crore international advertising budget, currently being handled by Ball Partnership, a Singapore-based agency. It appears that Civil Aviation Minister Madhavrao Scindia has asked all major advertising firms to pitch for the account. Scindia, it seems, is of the opinion that Air India needs to project a different image for its international travellers stressing on aspects of Indian hospitality rather than on technological prowess a la Thai Airways, which is the theme of commercials being aired at present. Air India has separate budgets for its international and domestic advertising. The domestic account, worth about Rs 3 crore a year, is now being handled by Hindustan Thompson Associates.

SOCIAL WORK

HE country's premier advertising agency, Hindustan Thompson Associates (HTA), is taking the cue from arch-rival Lintas India. In September it will kick off HTA Social, a wholly owned subsidiary that will handle advertising related only to social and civic issues for instance, eye donation, literacy or environment protection. According to D.K. Bose, HTA vice-president, and chief of the new divsion, business is expected from three major sources: Central and state governments, international agencies, and the corporate sector. It should help HTA to hang on to this line of business better-it has lost both the lucrative unices, and the Petroleum Conservation Research Association accounts. Right now, there is nothing except work for the National Cancer Foundation, which HTA handles free of charge.

MODI WATCH

HESE days S.K. Modi is quite hopeful. Frankly, there is no choice. His Rs 210-crore viscose fibre project with Cortaulds of the UK is still held up, eight years after the letter of intent was issued. Another project, a hotel venture for which he had signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, is hanging for the last three years. Modi says he has received all the approvals for the Cortaulds project in Patalganga, and that the Government "can't stop the hotel project; otherwise they will be making a mockery of the new (industrial) policy". But as of now, there is no go-ahead—the Cortaulds project is still awaiting term loan clearances from financial institutions, and the hotel project is still at the mou stage.

IBM REVISITED

HE world's largest computer company IBM, may be trying for a come-back in India. Sources say that at the end of June, IBM—through its Japanese subsidlary—approached the Tatas for a tie-up to manufacture a range of personal computers based on its PS/2 series. The Tatas already have a relationship with IBM through Tata Consultancy Services, which makes software for the US giant, and two other companies, Tata-Unisys and Tata-Elxsi. are tied to competitors. So, the way out is through a new company, in which IBM would have a 40 per cent stake, the rest going to the Tatas. IBM officials are keeping mum about firm plans, saying that as a formal proposal hasn't been submitted. submitted to the Government, it cannot divulge details.

NO LOOKING DOWN

ARKET watchers say it's all to do with the rise in fertiliser prices, but that sounds like an apology, as the trend began weeks before the Union budget presentation on July 24. To give just one example, since the second week of July, the average wholesale price of basmati

Chart by BK SHARMA THE PRICE OF RICE: RIDING HIGH 2,100 2,100 Average prices of Basmati Rice Rs per quintal (Rs per quintal) 2.000-1.800-1,400 1,550 1,075 6 13 AUG '91 23 30 16 **JUL '91**

rice in Delhi has increased steadily, beginning at Rs 1,550 a quintal and peaking last fortnight at Rs 2,100 a quintal. And compared to corresponding prices in August 1990, the jump is a phenomenal 95.3 per cent. If this is an indicator of inflation, then Indians are in for tough times.

BANKING ON TIES

ERCHANT bankers must be the only people blessing Union Finance Minister Manmohan Singh. High bank interest rates will soon force big industry to go knocking on the doors of merchant banks with hastily patched together plans for new issues. The larger banks are already ecstatic-their large retail network gives them an additional edge. Not to be outdone in this numbers game, smaller merchant banks are also sprucing up to face the challenge. Delhi-based Capital Trust Limited, for instance. Acknowledging its small size, it is said to be negotiating with the Bank of Rajasthan Limited, the largest private bank in the state, and Madras-based Bharat Overseas Bank, a joint sector firm, for possible tie-up arrangements. While Capital Trust will use its expertise to bag new issue contracts, the other banks will be used as conduits for selling the equity paper. This is the first time that such a strategic alliance has taken place in the financial markets. With primary capital markets expected to revive with a vengeance, other small merchant banks may soon take the cue and jump on the bandwagon.

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Poised for Growth

With top names in the corporate world pumping funds into this high-potential money spinner, biotechnology has finally arrived in India.

By AMARNATH K. MENON

HERE is a new buzzword in business, and companies all over the country are increasingly pitching money-almost Rs 100 croreto give it a boost. The word: biotechnology. It is there in the production and export of cardamom, lily bulbs and other ornamental plants. In speciality enzymes used by the brewing, detergent, pharmaceutical industries, and even in the rediscovery of an ancient technology, aquaculture-the practice of raising fish or prawn crops in a confined area.

Indo-American Hybrid Seeds (IAHS), a company based in Bangalore, has invested Rs 7 crore in biotechnology programmes. Southern Petrochemical Industries Corporation (SPIC), the Madras-based Rs 800-crore giant, is spending Rs 20 crore on a tissue culture facility in Coimbatore, and ITC Agro Tech, a division of the Caluctta-based cigarette, hotels and agricultural products conglomerate ITC Limited, has put in Rs 5 crore to increase the yield of sunflower seeds for its edible oil business. Plantation heavyweight Harrisons Malayalam Limited which is a member of the RPG group of compa-

nies, is planning to spend Rs 20 crore over the next three years to develop a biotech division in Bangalore.

There's more on the bandwagon: Hindustan Lever Limited, the UB Group, and the Godrej group, which is backing Hyderabad-based Unicorn Biotech's Rs5-crore foray into developing new varieties of seeds, vegetables and fruit. Says Unicorn's Managing Director Amul Sanghani: "The area is full of money-spinners."

Especially in the tissue culture for the plants segment of biotechnology. which most of the Indian companies are focusing on. Unlike in the West, where a









From orchids and BANANAS TO SPICES AND TOMATOES, BIOTECHNOLOGY HELPS TO PRODUCE QUICKER AND BETTER CROPS.

major chunk of biotech has much to do with medicinal applications, medical players in India are few and far between. For example, UB's Vittal Mallya Scientific Research Foundation is working on a yeast-based process to purify insulin, a drug that is used to contain diabetes, and plans to patent it abroad. The National Institute of Immunology in Delhi has developed diagnostic kits for the medical profession.

However, most entrepreneurs prefer to keep away, because developing anything for medical application is a multimillion dollar exercise, and it's easier and relatively cheaper to simply import

the technology or to set up an operation with multinational money—the way Bangalorebased Astra Research Centrehas done, in collaboration with Swedish pharmaceuticals giant AB Astra, for developing malaria detection kits. "Bringing a drug to the market can take at least 10 years and \$150 million (about Rs 390 crore)," says A.R. Vishwanath of Monozyme India Limited, a Hyderabad-based company which specialises in the production of enzymes and diagnostic kits. "Funding for the biotech route to drug researchis difficult to come by.'

For the moment, however, agricultural applications hold the centre stage. Says Jeet Prakash, director of IAHS' biotechnology division: "Diverse agroclimatic zones and highly qualified manpower offer a rich scope for technological advances in agricultural production." Biotech can be used to increase productivity with cash crops like tea, coffee, rubber, cotton, spices and a whole range of vegetables such as tomato, capsicum, onion and cauliflower. Prakash goes on to add: "The tissue culturebased business has enormous potential.'

However, those in the trade are reluctant to talk about how

fast the business can actually grow, from the present level of Rs 35 crore 8 year. Or how much, exactly, can be the returns from biotech in monetary terms. The technology is not clearly quantiliable and many projects, according to industry analysts, may be either lacking in technical capability or commercial viability. But the indications of the potential are already there.

Take Madras-based A.V. Thomas (AVT) group of companies, considered to be pioneers in the business. When AVIS cardamom exports were considerably affected by better Guatemalan crops, the company looked around for ways to

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THE NAMES IN THE GAME

- Indian Petrochemical Industries Limited, the Rs 800 crore Madras-based giant, is spending Rs 20 crore on a tissue culture facility in Coimbatore, and is looking around for foreign partners.
- ITC Agro Tech, a division of ITC Limited, has put in Rs5 crore on research projects in its Hyderabad facility for increasing sunflower yield to help its edibile oil business, and has tied up with researchers abroad.
- Harrisons Malayalam Limited, the plantation arm of the RPG group of companies, is planning to spend Rs 20 crore to develop a biotech division in Bangalore.
- Hindustan Lever Limited has developed a research centre in Bombay, and is working on virus-free strains of sugarcane, and cotton plants which resist the bollworm pest.
- The UB group, through the Vittal Mallya Scientific Research Foundation, has spent Rs 2 crore to set up a research foundation, which is working on the development of yeast-based drugs-insulin, for instance.
- Indo-American Hybrid Seeds, a Bangalorebased company, has invested Rs 7 crore in biotechnology programmes, to develop better varieties of seeds.

improve both quality and productivity-and then hit upon tissue culture as a solution. By improving on the cardamom plant through research, AVT came up with a variety that could be cropped in two, rather than the usual three years. Moreover, yield per hectare in-

creased from 70 kg to 250 kg, and earnings per hectare grew from Rs 6,000 to a whopping Rs 25,000. "The turnover of capital was low at the tissue culture stage," says AVT Director Ajit Thomas, "but jumped drastically when we went to the valueadded stage.'

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Then the company took it a step further by expanding its existing operations in the Cochin Export Processing Zone to produce ornamental plants—orchids and lilies, for instance—for the European market. AVT has

also signed on Phytonova, a subsidiary of Shell UK, to handle international marketing, and hopes to make at least Rs 2 crore on the venture by March next Year. The company's domestic biotech business is currently worth Rs 2.5 crore a year, which Thomas expects will increase substantially to Rs 12 crore

There is yet another success story in ITC Agro Tech. A sunflower hybrid developed by the company, PAC 3425, was judged the best in the national field tials of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The variety has shown a 11 per cent improvement in seed yield compared to the best in the country, and a 26 per cent improvement in oil yield. For a farmer, this means increased earnings ings of approximately Rs 4,000 per hectare. Looking to the future, the company has tied up for research collaboration with a number of organisations like the University of North Dakota in the US, the Cereal Research Institute in Hungary, and an Australian company, Pacific Seeds.

SPIC, for its part, is planning to up its

Hindustan Lever Research Centre in Bombay, which is working on cardamom, has already developed a virus-free strain of sugarcane which is currently under testing. The centre is now working on placing a bollworm pest resister for cotton plants.

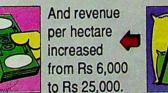
HOW BIOTECHNOLOGY CAN HELP



A.V. Thomas group wanted better vield for its cardamom crop.



The company felt the only way was through tissue culture research.





The results: yield per hectare increased from 70 kg to 250 kg.

ornamental plant exports from the Rs 50-lakh level this year to Rs 2 crore in the next two years. The company is being sounded out by Dutch companies for breeding in Holland, for export throughout Europe and even Australia. To gear up, spic is introducing tissue culture for lilies, carnations and chrysanthemums. IAHS' biotech division exported Rs 1.4 crore worth of flowers to Holland, Denmark and the UK last year and has also, like AVT, introduced better strains of cardamom and banana plants for the home market. Tissue culture banana, for example, begins to yield in as little as nine months, as compared to 15 with the usual variety. Harrisons has tied up with two German companies, Agri Saaten and Semundo Saatzucht, and will focus on a range of crops such as sorghum, maize and sunflower. The

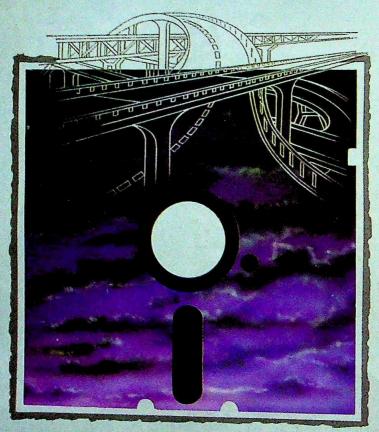
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This may seem like good news, and it is, but according to industry analysts, investment is nowhere near the level that India needs. "Industry is reasonably interested," says Kiran Mazumdar, managing director of Bangalore-based Biocon India, a company which makes and supplies industrial enzymes to the brewing and textile trade, among others. "Now is the time for them to bite." But they are not, and the big names that have entered the game are in no way representative of In-

dian industry. A total investment of Rs 100 crore is peanuts in a game that could fetch infinite returns.

Besides, there is excessive concentration of players in agricultural biotech, an easy-way-out phenomenon instead of the far more practical—thinking of survival-niche research. "It is a fad," says Mazumdar. "Biotechnology is a lovely word for the big corporate houses to use in their annual reports." This me-too approach, he says, can ruin the prospects of growth in the industry. This is certainly true for the smaller already organisations, who crowded out. "The shake-up is not far away." says Joseph Thomas, spic's executive director. "Only the bigger, stable players will remain." Branching out, obviously, is the way to a booming biotech business.

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The Big Burden

Finance Minister Manmohan Singh displayed more caution than zeal in the reform package for streamlining the Government enterprises.

ERHAPS it is just as well that Finance Minister Manmohan Singh didn't try to do anything very radical with the public sector. After the ruckus over the unprecedented budgetary allocations to the Rajiv Foundation, set up in memory of the assassinated former prime minister which is headed by Sonia Gandhi, and the withdrawal of fertiliser subsidy. which evoked strong protests from the farm lobby supported by some of the opposition parties, any real reform measures involving restructuring of the gargantuan public sector units, most of which had only increasing losses to show, could have brought the Government down. No government, especially P.V. Narasimha Rao's fragile minority

team, can really afford to fight a three-front war so soon after coming office. But an anticlimax it was,

nevertheless. The reformist

zeal of the fi-

nance minister lost both reformism and zeal quite soon when it came to dealing with the intractable Public sector, the holiest of holy cows in India. After Industrial Policy

statement's frank admission that many of the public sector enterprises have become a burden...to the Government', Singh's budget for 1991-92 did not propose anything more earthshaking and radical than unloading a

m and

fifth of that burden. His decision to sell up to 20 per cent of the shares of select public sector units to mutual funds and the public amounted to little more than what his predecessor, Yashwant Sinha, had already proposed in his March interim budget. "We have no experience (of privatisation). In all the countries that have gone along this path, there has been a lot of scandal." said the finance minister in an attempt at a weak justifica-

tion later. "I want to

tem. As an extended arm of a decisionshirking, self-perpetuating bureaucracy, it gobbles up enormous amounts of scarce capital, uses it in the most unproductive manner imaginable, bottles up prime assets such as real estate, pre-empts business oppor-

tunities with the aid of government

decree. And houses and feeds an army of employees whose productivity could be shamed by the superannuated.

A PROFLIGATE USER OF CAPITAL AND LABOUR

N terms of numbers, the 244 com-Imercial enterprises of the central public sector don't add up to too many

people. At 23 lakh, they account for less than 1 per cent of the country's workforce. Add the departmentally-run undertakings—the railways, the post and telecommunication staff, and the nationalised banks and financial institutions—and the sum of 60 lakh-odd would still be less than 3

per cent of the total workforce. Add all state and local governmental staff, and the total of 190 lakh would not even account for a tenth of the workforce. On the other hand, in the US, every seventh working individual is on the

he public sector is a monster-it is overstaffed, overfed, and pampered beyond belief.

go the cautious way."

However, less and not more caution is precisely what is required, because the public sector is a living monument to what can go wrong with a centralised state-run economic sys-

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Government's rolls, almost the idea by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri same as India's. So, why bother? Answer: Because the returns are negligible.

Capital-always scarce-is often wastefully deployed in the public sector. The Centre has invested more than Rs 100.000 crore in the enterprises it runs, but the returns are less than 3 per cent. In the '80s. the public sector's return on capital employed-a ratio which measures how productively capital has been used-dipped by a third and the trend looks unlikely to be reversed soon. For every Rs 100 it spends a year, it recovers less than Rs 5 from its employees.

As far as labour is concerned, overmanning is the norm. The railways, with its 18-lakh-strong workforce, chews up a third of its Rs 9,180 crore working expenses. Even by the public sector's bloated standards, the railways are way above the norm. The Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) makes massive losses year after year-Rs 161 crore in the year-ended March 1991—in part because its fares are pegged too low. They are half the Bombay fares. But even if the fares are fixed at more comfortable levels, the DTC may not exactly be rolling in money. It employs nine staffers to a bus when private sector operators on the same routes manage with a third of that number. As of end-March, the organisation had cumulative losses of Rs 609 crore, after Rs713.12 crore in losses

were written off. Consider Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML), which employed 10,000 people to produce less than a tonne of gold in 1989-90. The problem is obviously the poor gold

THE PUBLIC SECTOR ...BUT RETURNS ARE HAS GROWN OVER LOW AND HAVE BEEN THE YEARS... DECREASING STEADILY. 250 Ratio of public sector 244 units 100,000 166.3 Units sales to capital employed Rs 99,315 crore 160 200 80,000 150 157.3 150 NO. OF UNITS 60,000 140 130 100 40,000 120 5 units 50 20,000 110 INVESTMENT crore (Rs crore) 100 1981 '83 ' Year ending March 1951 '56 '61 '69 '74 '80 '85 '90 Note: Each of the years signify the starting years of various five-year plans

content of ores mined, but in the public sector whoever's heard of redeployment or retrenchment even though losses may be Rs 68 crore? Undaunted. BGML produces gold at a cost which is twice the market price.

IN ALL WRONG AREAS, AND **PAMPERED BEYOND BELIEF**

NE can argue that gold mining should be the Government's business. Or even steel. But bread and edible oils? Hotels, cement and construction? Given the Government's

propensity to get into everything, the central public sector has grown in size and numbers (see chart).

* Provisional, based on results of 189 companies

In construction, Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited, with 20,000-plus workers, has accumulated deficits that exceed its annual Rs 200 crore turnover by a wide margin. Ever heard of Weighbird India Limited? Well, it makes weighbridges among other things. The Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India does what its title says. All of them make things that aren't national priorities. And all of them make losses.

> In some areas, however, the folly of public sector entry was not an original sin-in the case of several companies in the textile, bicycle and steel sectors, the Government acquired sick companies through nationalisation. "You can say that

for sick private concerns, government take-over was, till recently, a form of exit policy," says Suresh Kumar, secretary in the Union Government's Department of Public Enterprises. But the troubles continued. The losses of companies taken over by the Government were at Rs 484.51 crore in the year ended March 1990. That means losing Rs 16,000 every year on each one of the three lakh employees doing time in these enterprises.

And now, to pampering. Before the Government announced its new policy that limited the

he Centre invested almost Rs 100,000 crore in public sector, but the returns are less than 3 per cent.

THE	THE
PROFIT (Rs crore)	LOSS (Rs crore
ONGC 1,066.64	Hindustan Fertiliser Corporation 228.76
Indian Oil Corporation 722.76	Fertiliser Corporation 170.33
National Thermal Power Corporation 605.47	Delhi Transport Corporation 161.20
india Limited 170 00	Bharat Coking 94.88
Mahanagar Telephone 134.52	Heavy Engineering 88.70 Corporation

broad areas-defence, railways, coal and atomic energy among them-vast swathes of industry were exclusive preserves of the Government. Put simply, business opportunities were preempted by decree.

But as long as there is a very large public sector-and a loss-making one at that-pre-emption will be the order of the day. Take the case of this year's general budget. Despite cuts, the Centre will be contributing over Rs 6,800 crore to prop up the public sector by way of equity and loans. If it were not such a drain on the nation's resources, the budget could well have spared the

private sector a Rs 2,000crore burden in the form of additional taxes.

Unfortunately, public sector makes profits only in areas where it operates in monopoly or near-monopoly. For example: the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ongc) in oil exploration, Indian Oil Corporation (10c) and Hindustan Petroleum in oil refining, the Steel Authority of India in steel and the National Thermal Power Corporation in the power generation sector. In 1990-91, these five companies contributed more than nine out of every 10 rupees the public sector earned in profits.

THE State Trading Corporation (STC) and the Mineral and Metals Trading Corporation derive most of their profits from importers who buy certain commodities exclusively from

them. Four out of every five rupees in the src sales comes from canalised goods. Shorn of this, the src's Rs 1,700 crore-plus turnover would come down to just over Rs 300 crore, with a commensurate drop in profits. What will src do if fewer items are canalised through it over time? Says S.A. Raza, executive director: "It will be difficult."

There are profit makers in competitive areas, but these are few: the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) made a net profit of Rs 4.5 crore last year. But a closer look shows that while the corporation's main business-hotels-lost money, the dutyfree shops it runs at various internaprisingly, the big losers in the public sector are all companies in the competitive arena: fertiliser, consumer products, textiles and construction, notching up a collective loss of more than Rs 850 crore last year.

WILL THE GOVERNMENT **PULL OFF PRIVATISATION?**

7ILL ITDC ever be privatised? No one knows for sure, but the organisation has asked a few banks to revalue its properties in Delhi, just in case. Will the Indian Petrochemicals Corporation have to seek private sector

public sector monopoly to Digitized by Arya Samajo Frundation Channai and eGangatri 50 companies have been shortlisted for disinvestment-indications are that thriving units such as ongc, foc and Maruti may be on the list-but Raza declines to elaborate.

Meanwhile, the public sector mutual funds, which are being consulted by the Finance Ministry on how to price public sector shares, have clearly indicated to the ministry that they have a right to decline any offer not to their liking. "The mutual funds have a right to say no," says B.R. Acharya, general manager, Canbank Mutual Fund. He goes on to add: "We are interested in a mixed portfolio.'

Kumar, the public enterprises sec-

retary, feels that it may be possible to raise Rs 2,500 crore by selling off as little as 5 per cent of the stock of 20 public sector units. Says he: "It all depends on the valuation of public sector shares." Kumar has a point. Most public sector units have enormously undervalued assets which can be reassessed to boost net worth. The stc. for example, values its headquarters on New Delhi's arterial Jan Path at Rs 19 crore in its books. It could easily be sold for Rs 60 crore at a conservative estimate. In a study of 26 profitable public sector companies, the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy estimated that the Government could garner Rs 12,200 crore if 20 per cent of their shares could be sold at a price-earnings ratio of 18-the ratio expresses a share's market

price as a multiple of annual earnings. But the Government is apparently trying to limit political fall-out of any sort, particularly, disinvestment. Instead, as passions cool, it may dilute its stake by simply allowing the public sector to raise additional equity capital from the public. That way the Government can legitimately claim that it has not disinvested. A pointer: the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India and the Shipping Credit and Investment Corporation of India—both Government organisations—raised money from the public a few months ago without eyebrows being raised. Something, obviously, is better than nothing. -R. JAGANNATHAN

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Instead of disinvesting, the public sector may be allowed to simply raise additional capital from the markets.

THE POTENTIAL IN DISINVESTMENT				
	MARKET CAPITALISATION (Rs crore)	20% ON OFFER (Including premium (Rs crore)		
ONGC	30,593.15	6,118.63		
Bharat Heavy Electricals	2,267.02	453.40		
Bharat Petroleum	2,309.22	461.84		
Maruti Udyog	791.28	158.26		
State Trading Corporation	597.42	119.48		
Hindustan Organic	556.53	111.31		
Hindustan Photofilm	124.91	24.98		
HMT	90.62	18.12		

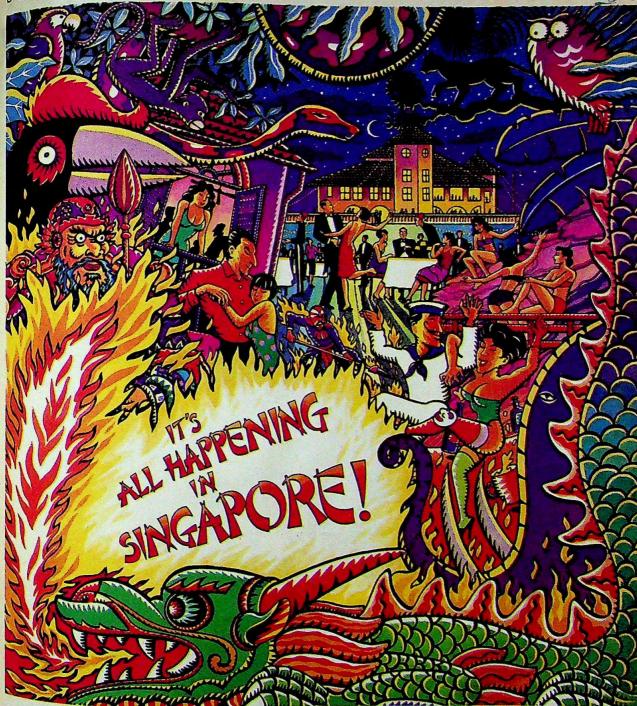
equity? Maybe not till next year, but the company's board sought a presentation from the Credit Rating Informa-

tion Services India Limited anyway, to find out the consequences of such a move. Minister of State for Surface Transport Jagdish Tytler believes he can get approvals to allow him to auction the DTC's huge bus depots to developers of commercial complexes. His target: to raise Rs 740 crore,

enough to wipe out the red stain from DTC's balance sheet.

Clearly, change is in the air, but the Government is playing its cards close to the chest. Moosa Raza, chairman of the Standing Committee of Public Enterprises, has gone on record to say

Singapore. The World's Arya Samaj Foundation Chehnai and Edangold rful City.



It's still a city of fine hotels, dining that spans the culinary spectrum and shops with the best the world has to offer.

But now you can visit the world's first oriental mythological theme park, at the recently transformed Haw Par Villa. Or boogie the night — all of it — away at the newly re-opened Bugis Street.

Then again, you could get into the

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swing of the jazz age at Alkaff Mansion.

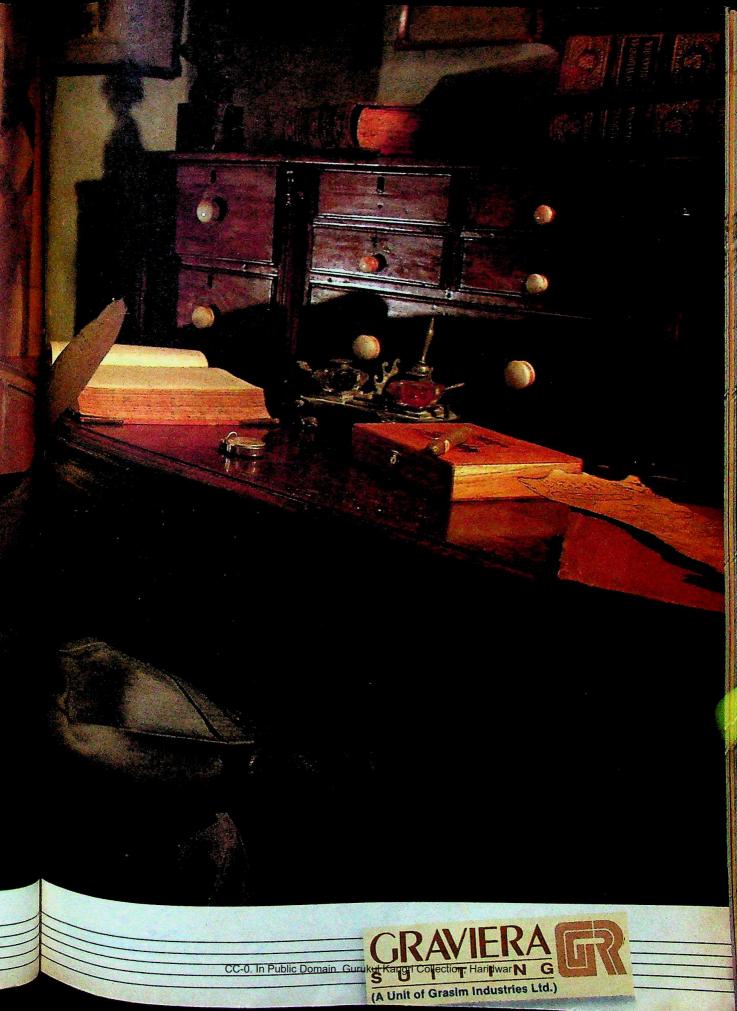
Or spend a colourful day shop, gallery and restaurant - hopping between Tanjong Pagar shophouses — now painted every shade of the rainbow.

A cablecar ride away on Sentosa, Singapore's recreation island, are golden beaches, a walk-in Butterfly Park and at the new Underwater World, a chance to come face-to-jaws with a shark. Also beneath the waves but without getting wet, the new Sealion Enclosure at Singapore's world famous open Zoo is lots of fun, as is the Penguin Parade at the BirdPark.

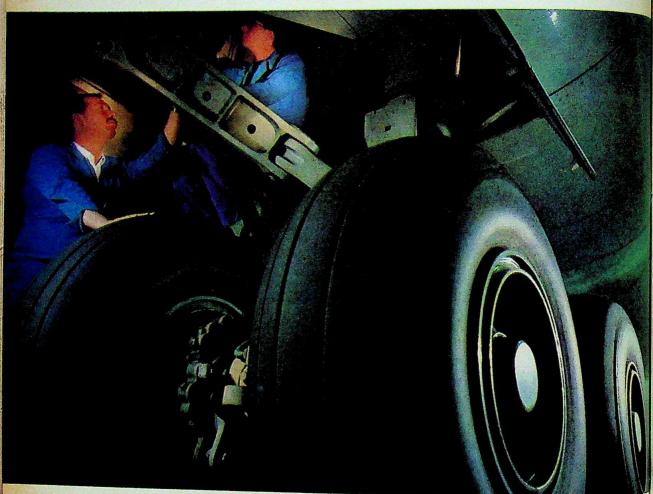
All these and many more make Singapore today's most colourful holiday choice for the whole family.

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We have people who check the people who check your aircraft.



You might well call it excessive German thoroughness that we don't let our technicians work unsupervised on an aircraft until they have completed four years' basic training and have at least eight years' practical experience. It goes without saying, however, that their work is still inspected by an even more experienced

technician who, in turn, is checked by a highly qualified engineer. And, after all that, there is the independent inspector from the technical control department who reports directly to the Board of Management.

We call this Lufthansa's contribution to inflight relaxation — it's something we simply owe you and ourselves.

Reli

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Lufthansa

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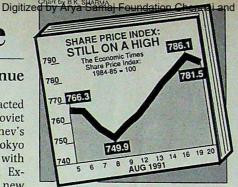
THE MARKETS

Perky Phase

The up swing may continue

NTERNATIONAL markets reacted predictably to the news of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's ouster—the slide starting on the Tokyo exchange. In India, however, with trading on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) commencing on the new account, the market on August 20 continued its bullish surge, led by Reliance Industries Limited (RIL). Reflecting this surge, the BSE 30-share sensitive index was up by 23 points to an all-time high of 1,749.91.

It was only a day later that the Indian markets took note of world events, with the stock-markets reacting adversely. The BSE index fell by nearly 40 points to 1,709.43. Among the pivotals, RIL had fallen by Rs 10 to Rs 185, and Larsen & Toubro Limited had declined by Rs 5.50 to Rs 142.50. Tata Steel was down by Rs 11 to Rs 236, and ACC lost Rs 90 to close at Rs 3,255. mostly because bull operators began to sell out.



Ironically, this came at a time when international markets were bouncing back, having probably realised that they had been over-reacting. A Bombay-based financial analyst feels there are two reasons for the late reaction on Indian markets. "One is the lag effect on account of our closed economy, and the other is that the Indian markets were overheated, and were looking for an excuse for a correction," he says. "This international crisis provided the chance."

From all accounts a correction was due. In the last fortnight the market had shot up over 60 points, and this was on top of an increase of over 500 points over the past seven weeks. But

and eGangotri there are some analysts who feel that this is not the end of the bull run. With blue chip scrips in short supply, several mutual funds have been resorting to the volatile money markets to park their funds. At opportune moments these funds are returned to the stockmarkets, which only pushes the index up further. Excessive speculation has been cited as another reason for the stock-markets' dazzling performance in the past weeks. But B.R. Acharya, general manager, Canbank Mutual Fund, doesn't agree. "For every decline of 30 to 40 points the market bounces back to much higher levels," says Acharya. "This wouldn't happen in the case of excessive speculation."

The general market expectation is that the good times will continue till Diwali, when the primary, or new issues market should perk up and take out some of the steam from the secondary market. What is not being talked about is how the corporate sector is likely to fare during the year. Says a corporate analyst: "Turnovers may go up, but profitability is going to be under severe pressure." And with first half results due in October, the market is going to have to keep a close watch on bottomlines.

ACTIVE STOCKS

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Indian Organic.....

	*********			9.5
	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	For
			20.8.91	
Ashok Leyland	174.00	109.00	125.00	48 00*-
Associated Cement	3380 00	1200.00	2255 00	155 00 ±
Asian Paints	267 50	215.00		22.50 ÷
Atlas Copco	112 50	42.00		11.25 -
Bajaj Auto	712.00	500.00	A CONTRACTOR	32.50 ÷
Baroda Rayon	/ 12.00	400.00	1	50.00 -
oute mena	120.00	A Marine Contraction	24/361-0ac631	Sale March
Danardur	200 00	72.00	100000000	25.00 +
-wid Inth	054 00	228.00	300.00	150000000000000000000000000000000000000
Blow Plast	351.00	168.00	332.00	
-oniody Duelna		40.00		25.00 +
Britannia Ind.	295.00	150.00	A DESCRIPTION	21.25 +
Brooke Bond	190.00	112.00		19.00 +
Cadbury India	172.50	116.00	153.00	
		132.50	187.50	
Century Toxell	435.00	162.50	390.00	17.50 -
Century Textiles Colgate Palmolive Cyanamid	6950.00	3625.00	6825.00	100.00+
Cyanamid Cyanamid	380.00	250.00	361.25	23.75 +
Cyanamid	172.00	76.25	155.00	nil
Dunlon	300.00	123.00	270.50	11.00 +
E.I. Hotele	75.00	46.50	71.00	1.00 -
Escorte	60.00	35.00	55.00	5.00 +
Finoley Cold	172.00	127.00	160.00	2.00 -
Garware At 1	260.00	140.00	225.00	12.50 -
G.E. Shin-1	44.00	27.00	39.00	1.50 -
G.S.F.C	102.00	25.00	88.00	1.50 -
urasim I- 1	260.00	150.00	237,50	5.00 +
GUI And	316.25	167.50	300.00	2.50 -
mind Al Comer	11 260.00	90.00	243.75	7.50 +
tund on metali	342 50	200.00		10.00 +
THE PROPERTY OF THE PARTY OF TH	. 2100 on			150.00 -
THE COLUMN	180 00	132 50	Section of the Control of the Contro	
Hoechst Motors	36.25	18.80	34.25	
10	4100 00	2400.00		

---...4100.00 2400.00 3600.00 300.00 -

.........80.00 30.00 70.00 1.00 --

..66.00 30.00 61.00 1.00 +

HIGH	row	CLOSE 20.8.91	25
Indian Rayon193.00	104.50	188.00	23.50 +
Ingersoll-Rand385.00	240.00	345.00	5.00 -
ITC260.00	99.00	240.00	11.00 -
I.K. Synthetics60.00	27.00	53.00	3.00 +
Kinetic Engineering 225.00	145.00	205.00	15.00 +
Kirloskar Cummins 198.75	95.00	187.50	12.50 +
KSB Pumps240.00	160.00	220.00	5.00 -
Larsen & Toubro 163.00	90.00	142.50	17.50 -
Lipton170.00	57.50	145.00	10.00 +
LML Ltd37.50	21.00	31.50	1.00 -
M&M 115.00	57.50	92.50	11.25 +
Mastershares 42.50	20.00	29.25	0.50 -
Motor Industries 1525.00	675.00	1450.00	50.00 +
Mukand Ltd215.00	117.50	147.50	1.25 -
National Organic 1950.00	925.00	1575.00	265.00 -
Nestle India195.00	111.25	193.00	5.00 +
Nirlon41.25	16.00	27.00	6.50 -
Orkay Silk Mills39.00	17.50	33.50	2.00 -
Peico Electronics129.00	53.00		
Premier Auto66.00	30.00	61.00	
Raymond192.50	110.00		
Reckitt & Colman375.00	205.00		130.00 -
Reliance Industries 204.00	91.25	185.00	10.00 -
Siemens India170.00	112.50		3.75 -
Shaw Wallace185.00	77.00		11.00 -
Shriram Fibres63.00	33.00	60,00	1.00 -
SKF Bearings2925.00	1650.00	2675.00	25.00 +
SPIC	33.00	64.00	nil
Tata Steel251.00	170.00		
Telco317.50	142.50		31.25 +
Titan Watches93.75	58.00		
Vam Organic225.00	102.50		30.00 +
Videocon Int300.00	133.70		70.00 +
Voltas140.00	92.60		AND SECTION ASSESSMENT
	1000	20 00	0 00

WORLD VALUE OF RUPEE

		Selli res R	Buy:
COUNTRY	CURRENCY UNIT	Rac	TT I I
Australia	Dollar 1	20.3686	20.1579
	Shilling 100		201.4783
Bahrain	Dinar1	69.5314	67.5978
	Taka		72,4195
	Dollar 1		22.6390
Denmark	Kroner 1	3.7242	3.6828
Egypt	Pound1	8.1445	8.0155
France	Franc 1	4.2918	4.1841
Germany	DM1	.14.5349	14.1844
Hong Kong.	Dollar 1	3.3654	3.3323
	Rupiah 100		1.3209
Iran	Rial100	N/A	N/A
Italy	Lira	1.9294	1.9037
Japan	Yen100	19.1939	18.7268
Kenya	Shilling 1	0.9141	0.9040
Kuwait	Dinar11	N/A	N/A
Malaysia	Dollar 1	9.3655	9.2722
Mauritius	Rupee1	1.6148	1.5942
Nepal	Rupee1	0.6070	0.6056
Netherlands	Guilder 1,	12.7326	12.5967
Pakistan	Rupee 1	1.0252	1.0054
Singapore	Dollar	15.0165	14.8622
	Peseta 1		0.2285
	Rupee 1		0.6224
	Kroner 1		
	Franc1		
	Shilling 1		
	Baht100		
UK	Pound 1	42.4178	42.1141
USA	Dollar 1	26.1438	25.8900
	Dirham 1		
USSR	Rouble 1	29.937	29.9356

These rates were supplied by The Bank of Tokyo Limited. New Delhi and quoted between the banks on 20.8.91.

.....47.00 16.00 38.00 8.00 -

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TUBES

GLS LAMPS

CHOKES

PATTIES

STARTERS

FLOODLIGHT FIXTURES

LAMP BALLASTS

GENERAL PURPOSE

DECORATIVE FIXTURES

INDUSTRIAL **FIXTURES**

STREET LIGHT **FIXTURES**

WEATHER PROOF CONTROL GEAR BOXES

FTL STRATERS & HPSVL IGNITORS



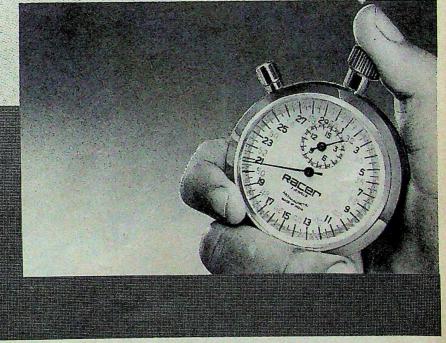
Ajay Electrical Industries Ltd.

A-6, INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MOHALI, PUNJAB - 160051, PHONE: 570666, 570574, TELEX: 395482 AEIL IN.

A-1, HARSHA HOUSE, KARAMPURA COMMERCIAL COMPLEX, NAJAFGARH ROAD, NEW DELHI-110015, PHONE: 5430428, 590924, 5411580. TELEX: 031-76246 AEIL IN.

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But then that's how sure GATI is of meeting delivery schedules. So sure that we'll go as far as to say 'if we're late don't pay us' And that's because GATI has standby modes of transport which virtually eliminate all delays.

There are other features too that set GATI apart.

Desk-to-desk convenience: With GATI's desk-to-desk service, all you need to do is pick up the phone. And GATI will pick up the cargo, rush through distances and deliver bang on time. Saving you the bother of dropping and collecting your consignments.

Totally protected... GATI takes the anxiety out of sending fragile time sensitive cargo. There are special containers to ensure that there's no damage in transit. What's more, there's the added advantage of GATI's All Risk Cover to protect your cargo against any contingency.

So call GATI. Especially for medium-sized cargo. Which means individual packages should not exceed 40 kgs or 12 cubic feet in

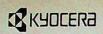


A division of

Transport Corporation of India Ltd

Individual packages should not exceed 40 Kgs or 12 cubic feet in volume.

: AGRA: Tel: 72411, AHMEDABAD Tel: 834773, ALLAHABAD Tel: 52380/56446/51943, BANGALORE Tel: 224979/220608, BARODA: Tel: 541626, BELGAUM: Tel: 751232, BHOPAL: ANDL: Tel: 2593/21582, BOMBAY: Tel: 494280/14948/60, CHANDIGARH: Tel: 22557, COUMBATORE Tel: 22818, DELHI: Tel: 521954/7533411, HOSUR: Tel: 2370, HYDERABAD: J. INDORE Tel: 36475, JAIPUR: Tel: 494280/14948/60, CHANDIGARH: Tel: 2558/2646035, MADURAI: Tel: 25692/24439/37443, NAGPUR: Tel: 7936, NASIK: Tel: 30841, Tel: 54307/50108, SHOLABUR: Tel: 266222233, SUBAT: Tel: 51879, THANE Tel: 5345752/50748, VIJAYAWADA: Tel: 74498, VISAKHABATNAM: Tel: 427654/2404 304, PUNE Tel: 54307/50126, SHOLAPUR: Tel: 4145, LUCKNOW: Tel: 4145, TUCKNOW: Tel: 54575752/507248, VUAYAWADA: Tel: 74498, VISAKHAPATNAM: Tel: 63765/63024. ic Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar



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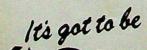
GO WIDE SHOOT NORMAL CLOSE UP RMAL EVEN CLOSER

ZOOM YASHICA Now capture the action with a wireless infrared Now Capture the remote control with a wireless intrare soon camera that gives you continuous the <00milec SU. Lightweight, compact 3 autorocus while You frame with the electro 200m autofocus while that gives you continuous controlled stepless 200m from wide anale (38mm) autofocus while controlled stepless of the photo (90mm). And a Macro Mode that controlled stepless to telephoto (90mm). And a Macro Mode that to volur subject Lot lets you get as close as 50cm to your subject. the choice of an optional remote.

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Price L 1981-8 Current

3.0%

Whole

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Money Supply Rs Cror Current 1

18.9%

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Foreign Trade Rs Cror 10.7% EXPORTS

10.5% Export wiping in Apr

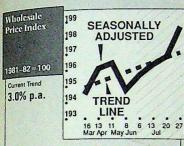
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1984-85 40.1%

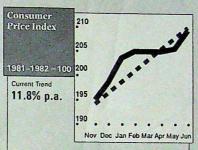
Share expect and fa

Not much good news here, liberalisation or not. Inflation stays unchecked, and it doesn't look as if the Government can do much about it. Exports fell again while imports rose. Devaluation doesn't automatically help exports, unless it is backed by an open economy. And it doesn't look as if the Government can do much here, either.

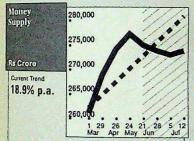
All data are seasonally adjusted. Current trends are computed on the basis of six months' (weekly data) or one-and-a-half years' (monthly data) figures.



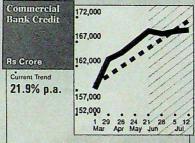
Wholesale prices rose by almost 1 per cent over the fortnight-a response to the inflationary budget.



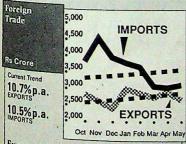
Consumer prices were up by 2 per cent in June-the post-budget impact should be



Money supply registered a slight increase, which was reflected in the price indices—the signs are bad.

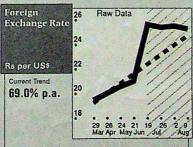


Commercial bank credit remained stable over the fortnight-since March, it has shown a steady upswing.



Exports fell and imports rose in May wiping out the trade surplus registered in April—no good news here.

HE



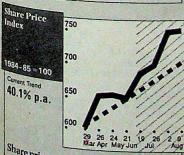
The rupee appreciated marginally against the dollar, settling down after the drastic early-July devaluation.

WHOLESALE PRICES

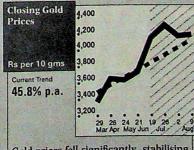
Growth of items in the 2nd fortnight of July 1991

	% Growth
Phosphatic Fertilisers	10.07
Tea	
Chillies	
Nitrogenous Fertilisers	
Onions	
Petrol	
Aviation Spirit	9.69
Taploca	8.85
Cotton Raw	8.72
Machine Tools	
Cashew-Nut	
Logs Timber Bamboo	
Bananas	
Eggs	
Maize	
Art Silk & Artificial Fabrics	5.08
Lubricating Oil	5.03
Linseed	
Cigarettes	
Furnace Oil	
Mustard Oil	4.81
Bajra	3.88
Masoor	
· Tobacco & other Tobacco Produc	
and a control of the	cts 3.23
Rape & Mustard Seeds	3.23
Rape & Mustard Seeds	3.11
Rape & Mustard Seeds	3.11
Rape & Mustard Seeds	3.11
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragl	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragl	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 2.23
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product Coffee Copra	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 2.23 2.09
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product Coffee Copra Cement	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 2.23 2.09 2.04 1.97
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product Coffee Copra Cement Diesel Oil	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 2.209 2.04 1.97 1.92
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundrut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product Coffee Copra Copra Cement Diesel Oil Linseed Oil	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 1.97 1.97 1.89 1.78
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product Coffee Copra Cement Diesel Oil Linseed Oil Cycles	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 2.09 1.97 1.92 1.89 1.78
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi. Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product Coffee Copra Cement Diesel Oil Linseed Oil Cycles Cotton Yarn	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 8. 2.09 2.04 1.97 1.92 1.89 1.78 1.64
Rape & Mustard Seeds Sugar Tractors Silk Raw Barley Gingelly Seed Groundnut Seeds Ragi. Wheat Ball Bearing Handloom & Powerloom Product Coffee Copra Cement Diesel Oil Linseed Oil Cycles Cotton Yarn Silk & Artificial Fabrics	3.11 3.09 3.00 2.98 2.63 2.51 2.46 2.41 2.32 2.23 8. 2.09 2.04 1.97 1.92 1.89 1.78 1.64 1.63
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Of the 134 series considered, 120 of them with a total weight of 73.889 had a non-negative rate of growth and 14 of them with a total weight of 10.963 had a negative rate of growth.



Share prices continued to rise, fuelled by expectations of further liberalisation and far too much hope.

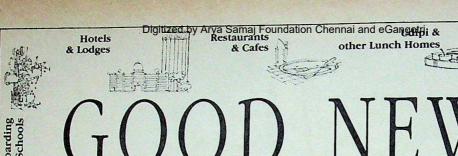


Gold prices fell significantly, stabilising at the pre-budget level-the bullion boom may be tapering off.

SELECTED INDICATORS

į	Coal	1330
	Thousand Tonnes, June	14700
l	Saleable Steel	
Į	Thousand Tonnes, June730,1	638.7
l	Cement	
į	Thousand Tonnes, June4050	3882
	Fertilisers	
	Thousand Tonnes, June	802.8
	Call Money Rate	
	Per Cent, June 24.64	10.44

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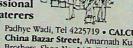
DELHI 11/F, Kamala Nagar, Crockery Emporium, Tel 2911694 Sarojini Nagar, Vandana,

Shop No. 93, Sarojini Nagar Market, Tel 672818

• AGRA Johri Bazar, Dada Glass & Crockeries, Tel 74583 • AIZWAL Bara Bazar, B.C. Dey &

Sons, Tel 237 • AMRITSAR Hall Bazar, B.C. Dey & Sons, Tel 2237 • AMRITSAR Hall Bazar, Harbans Crockery Stores, Tel 44704
• BANGALORE 340, Chickpet, Rashmi Steels, Tel 75790 • BERHAMPUR One Way Traffic Road, J. K. Enterprises, Tel 3028 • BOMBAY Dadar, B.S. Road, Dhiraj Sales Corporation, 33.





Messes Padhye Wadi, Tel 4225719 • CALCUTTA Old China Bazar Street, Amarnath Kundu & Brothers, Shop No. 14/3; Tel 267916

· CHANDIGARH Sector 15-D, Indian Crockery House, Shop No. 45, Tel 23779

• COIMBATORE R. S. Puram, Ideal Gift House, 8, East Bashyagaralu Road, Tel 40772
• ERNAKULAM Broadway, Anthony Francis &
Sons, Tel 352897 • IMPHAL Thangal Bazar,

Roopak Agency, Tel 21846. • INDORE Jawahar Marg, 292, Cooker House . JABALPUR: Opp. Town Hall, Shanti Steel Centre, Shop No. 3, Omti • KANPUR Harsh Nagar, M. K. Agencies, 111/2, 1st Floor, Tel 253201 • MADRAS 18, Evening

Military



Canteens • MARGAO Behind Municipality Building. T. D. Parodkar & Company, P. O. Box 65, Tel 22923

 PATNA Nepali Kothi, H.C. Enterprises,
Boring Road, Tel 262776 • PUNE Raviwar Peth.
 Peddge Rajendra & Company, 894, Daroowala Bridge, Tel 433189 • RANCHI Main Road, Udayan, Tel 21646 • SECUNDERABAD R. P. Road Deccan Iron Works, Dundoo Bhavan, Tel 73447
• SHILLONG Dhankheti, V. K. Ghai & Company. Bauri Mansion, Tel 2531

Quality India Trusts



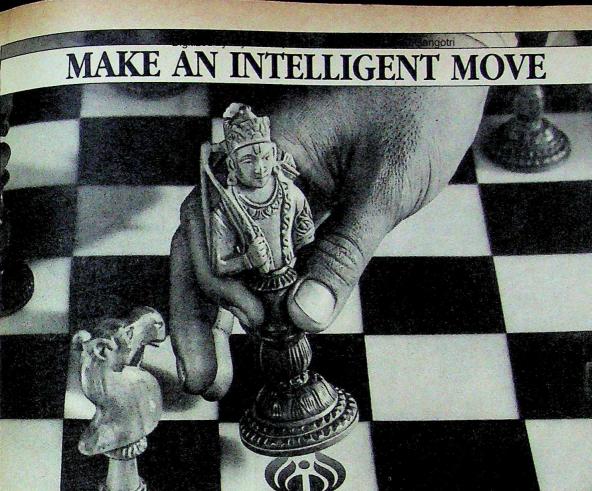


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SCHOOL STATES OF THE STATES OF

When my secretary suggested I switch to Speed Post, I out-of-questioned her out of the room.

Later, better sense prevailed (she is a charming secretary, and quite indispensable) and I called her in to hear the details.

In brief, she said that Speed Post was as efficient, reliable and accountable as any other courier, much less expensive, with a much larger network. So there.

"Try it", I said gruffly.
Famous first words. Now, we use only Speed Post. And every now and then, my secretary looks at me out of the side of her eye....



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French Connection

■ IF you're in the shampoo business, you could be in for a hair-raising experience. Laboratoires Garnier, a subsidiary of French giant L' Oreal SA, is planning an end-October launchin India. The Indian licensee, Bombay-based Allure Cosmetics Private Limited, will launch three Garnier shampoos under the original Ultra Doux brand-name. The price will be in the Rs 66-70 range

for a 200 ml bottle, compared to about Rs 55 for Hindustan Lever's Sunsilk brand. But isn't India's Rs 100 crore-a-vear shampoo market a little stretched? "On the contrary," says Allure's Marketing Director Dinesh Dayal, "the market isn't full-up at all." It remains to be seen whether Garnier's motto of "mixing science with seduction" works out in India.

The Ultra Doux range



Quick-Fix Solution

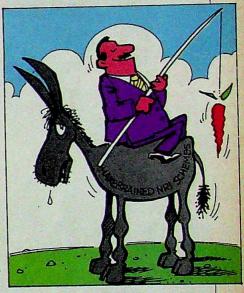
■ VEHICLE owners who dread flat tyres may breathe easier now. J.K. Rathod, an Ahmedabad-based businessman, is launching Reyfix, a product that selfseals punctures. One pours some liquid into tyre tubes. The chemical reacts to the change in pressure if punctured, and solidifies where thetear is. Treating a car tyre costs Rs 50 for 200 ml, a truck tyre needs 600 ml, and atwo-wheeler, 150 ml atyre. Jay Chemicals India Limited, the manufacturer, guarantees trouble-free running for two years. The product is being tested by Maruti Udyog, Ashok Leyland, and Hindustan Motors, among September The others. launch will be in Ahmedabad, Bombay, Calcutta, and Delhi. If the product clicks, it'll be good-bye to dirty hands and jacks.



■ IN the Government's rush to prostrate itself in front of anyone who has foreign currency, the NRI has been picked out as a prime target. And with this, various schemes-most of them harebrained—are being proposed. For example the one being tom-tommed by the

NRIFoundation India. It suggests charging every NRI abroad anything between \$100 and \$1,000 (Rs 2,600 and Rs 26,000) a year depending on individual earning capacity, for an 'insurance' fund which will be handled by the Government of India. Every time Indians abroad are in trouble, say, like those who had to flee from Kuwait, the fund will look after them when they re-India. to turn

Digitized by Arya Samaj Followitor Organ Ni Riss eGangotri Meanwhile, the fund will keep increasing in size and will be a ready forex kitty for India to use: foundation chief Dalbir Singh estimates \$10 billion (Rs 26,000 crore) can be tapped this way. There's only one hitch-not even the foundation knows how it is going to work the scheme, let alone the Government.



Trading Charges

■ MATTERS at Swadeshi Polytex Limited (SPL), Ghaziabad-based manufacturer of polyester staple fibre (PSF), have taken another turn with sacked chief executive (corporate affairs), Kuldip Mehta, going to the Delhi High Court against Chairman and Managing Director R. Ramakrishna. Meanwhile, Direc-

tor Gaurav Swarup, whose family concern Paharpur Towers Cooling holds a 24-per cent stake in SPL, is gunning for Ramakrishna, who also heads the National Corpora-Textile tion (NTC). NTC in turn has a controlling 34 per cent equity in SPL. "Mehta

sacked," charges was Swarup, "because Ramakrishna wants to run SPL like his fiefdom.'

'Mehta neither managed, nor allowed me to manage the company," says Ramakrishna, who took over in May. SPL's earnings have slipped by Rs 5.62 in 1989 to Rs 61.92 crore this year, and profit has dropped by Rs 1.32 crore to Rs 1.01 crore.

R. Ramakrishna: confident



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"I missed excellent chances"

Viswanathan Anand's exclusive account of his key match



INDIA'S chess czar Viswanathan Anand, the first Asian to reach the quarter-finals of the World Chess Championship cycle, in a first person account, de-

scribes his strategy during the pulsating world championship quarter-final match against former world champion Anatoly

Karpov. He recounts here the lessons he learnt from it.

7 HEN I was paired with Anatoly Karpov in February this year, my first thoughts were about the enormous task ahead. He had been world champion for 10 years (1975-1985) and is arguably the most experienced match player alive. He started playing in the candidates cycle in 1974 and played matches against all the top players since then. Two days after the lots were drawn in Linares, Spain, I beat Karpov in the super grandmaster tournament there and things were beginning to look good.

A match against a player of Karpov's stature is an extremely challenging and stimulating event. And in the last six years he has played well over 150 games against the reigning world champion Gary Kasparov.

To meet this challenge I asked Soviet Grandmaster Mikhail Gurevich, also playing in Linares, to be

my second in preparing for the quarterfinal match against Karpov in Brussels. He is a leading trainer in the Soviet Union and has seconded Kasparov in his matches against Karpov in Leningrad, New York and Lyons. Our sixweek training session was in Brussels itself. Gurevich is based there as he migrated to Belgium this year.

I had been curious as to how a top

Soviet player would approach our training. It duly began in a grandiose fashion. "Chess is a game of exchanges of harmony of coordination between pieces." I assumed this was the usual Shakespearian routine before we got down to business but this guy was serious. "You have to be able to see the position in a complete sense-not as a bishop here and rook there but as a

SHYAM TEKWANI

One of the lessons I learnt is to understand the importance of good technique—to get a winning position on the board.

> coordinated army." This is also the primary lesson whispered to potential champions in the chandeliered halls of Moscow's central chess club.

I began to understand this concept better as we analysed Karpov's game. Every now and then Gurevich would interrupt our analysis with observations like "Watch Karpov's next few moves carefully as he anticipates

Black's mistakes" and "Look at him neutralising his opponent's plans". Gurevich pointed out the strengths and weakness game by game. Karpov's moves either benefit his position or leave it unchanged. But his opponents, lacking this understanding and finesse, almost always overstretch themselves and take what at best can be called "unnecessary risks". Then

Karpov proceeds to outplay them slowly but with deadly accuracy.

Our opening preparation included analysis of all sorts of middle- and end-game positions to avoid getting into positions where I'd feel lost. Another of Karpov's strong points is his ability to keep the tension in a position on the board for long. This is to tire out the opponent, force him into errors, then make him lose the thread of the game.

After six weeks of training I felt sufficiently prepared to return to Madras for some rest and physical training. I was also able to repare myself mentally for the difficult task ahead. I thought about all the possible outcomes and psychological problems experienced by so many match players. By the time I left for Brussels after the brief rest in Madras I was in a mood of cautious optimism.

Undoubtedly, Karpov was the favourite before our match started. Our match was extremely

combative. Hundreds of journalists from all over the world, and a thousand other spectators watched the matches. Two hard-fought games produced two adjournments that were finally drawn, with both players missing chances. This was a satisfactory start, but the next two games gave me some cause for worry. After missing several excellent chances in game Ahmedabad.

t was a great morning. After a long time a bird chirped me awake. I was going to Bombay for a training programme. So no office. A whole day to pack and plan. And then a flight at three in the afternoon. Documents, files, pre-training brochures, clothes, stationery, air-tickets. I packed in everything. A quick shower and I was ready to leave. Just when I turned the key to lock my door the phone rang. Goddamn it... now who? I walked in, snatched the phone off the hook and yelled, "Hello!" It was my wife calling from work — "Hi! Did you pack in your Windsor?" My heart missed a beat, then I relaxed. I had. Back in the taxi, happy on my mindfulness, l

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Life's so much easier with them.

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KARPOV VS ANAND

Veteran's

N the end there was a sense of disappointment at having been checkmated at the threshold of what would have been a glorious triumph. After the strength-sapping psychic warfare with Yevgenevitch Anatoly Karpov, 40, at the SAS Royal Hotel in Brussels, the 21-year-old Viswanathan Anand said: "I threw it away. Karpov was the favourite. I never imagined he'd give me so many good positions." Ultimately it seemed that Anand relied too much on moves made against Karpov in earlier matches and was well and truly trapped by the ruthless veteran.

Anand started his quest for the world title at the beginning of the year by outclassing Soviet grandmaster Alexie Dreev to qualify to go to Brussels for the quarter finals. In the process he joined the company of the legendary Bobby Fischer, Karpov and Soviet Grandmaster Vassily Ivanchuk who are the others who have won three games in a row.

Watching and playing one another in a series of games is as much a battle of nerves as it is of strategy. Thus a second who can analyse games and give useful tips to the player who is tense and tired is a necessity. The Soviet Grandmaster and world's number 11 Mikhail Gurevich, who had also helped Kasparov against Karpov, was only too happy to help another Karpov challenger. Gurevich's fee: US \$5,000 if Anand wins.

Karpov could not stomach the fact that Gurevich was helping Anand. The fact that he lost to Anand in Linares made Karpov even more anxious and after the tournament he made his unhappiness known by accusing Kasparov of "immorality" for allowing his second Gurevich to help Anand.

Karpov: super moves

The off-board wrangle did not surface while play was on. Anand seemed relaxed turning often to look at his father K. Viswanathan, a retired railway official, and his mother Sushila, who initiated him into the game, sitting in the front row. Karpov, who has won more tournaments than any other player in history sat with his chin resting on a thin hand and a deadpan face.

"Anand has a phenonmenal memory," says chess expert Nasiruddin Ghalib. At home in Madras, Anand, a commerce graduate. spends his time analysing games and looking at variations on his laptop computer. "It is the unique nature of Anand's talent at chess that brought us closer. We appreciate excellence and we will continue to do so," says P.R. Venketaram Raja, director of the Ramco group which has already spent Rs 10 lakh on sponsoring Anand.

His games against Dreev and Karpov have clearly shown that Anand has it in him "to bring the world title to the birthplace of chess", as P.T. Ummerkoya, secretary of the All India Chess Federation said. -- AMARNATH K. MENON

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri three, I lost a see-saw struggle in game four.

The rest day was time for licking wounds and taking stock. I had excellent positions in three games but Karpov's skilful defence made sure I got just one point. Tension deepened. It was more than I bargained for. Therefore, I made a short trip to the fitness centre. Karpov was in the lead. So, I played the next two games determined to win. Both games were adjourned and I had good chances to win both.

I had ingrained some aspects of Karpov's play into my own. I was especially pleased to outplay him in his own territory in the same way that he does-the Boa Constrictor style. I won the sixth game efficiently to tie the match. But another missed opportunity in the fifth game overshadowed the relief of catching up.

We had spent the whole night analysing the adjourned position and I had been optimistic of winning both games. My excellent preparation had resulted in more opportunities to win than I dreamed of before the match. The lack of experience in match play became evident soon. Karpov has lived through the tension many times before and seemed to know the critical moments in every game.

Being the underdog I had all the support. Seeing me dominate Karpov in some matches I however began to get an enormous amount of support from the spectators and journalists. Other players had given me a 50:50 chance. They too changed their minds seeing me play and joked that Karpov will have to find a new career and so on. But as it turned out he retained his old job. He drew the seventh game and grabbed his chance when I made an incredible blunder. I spent a few minutes letting the horror sink in. As Gurevich puts it: "The match was lost in one wrong move.'

One of my lessons in this match was to understand the importance of good technique—the ability to get winning positions on the board. In the final analysis, it is disappointing to lose a match one was so close to winning. But an overall 50 per cent score against the formidable Karpov gives enough hope for the future.



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Buy pure, bei

TELETALK

 India's Rajiv, Simi Garewal's moving film on Rajiv Gandhi, had many holding back the lears when the first part was telecast. But it almost didn't make it. Mandi House didn't want their homage to the former prime minister to be sponsoredushered in by advertisements as it was. Nor did they want to pay more than Rs50,000 per half hourthe stipulated amount. There the matter stood until four days before Dday-DD gave Garewal the green signal for sponsors. "I had only 24 hours to get the sponsors." she says, plus a holiday and a weekend. To the rescue came R.P. Goenka, picking up 50 per cent of the tab.

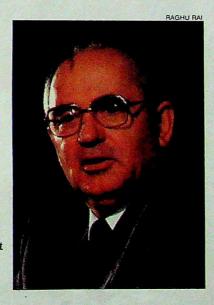
acid).

- Doordarshan not only put its foot in its mouth but the Foreign Office's as well. Or perhaps it was the other way round. After announcing the coup against Gorbachev, it telecast a long recap of the Soviet leader's life and times-almost like a visual obituary. To have the man return after a few days is not too convenient. Especially after the prime minister's cryptic statement about the need for caution when carrying out reforms. The question is who was he warning.
- It's uncanny. Chinese TV and DD are coproducing a two-hour ilm on Bodhidharma, the Indian Buddhist monk believed to have taken Buddhism and the martial arts to China. Sashi Kumar, joint general manager PTI-TV, has been offered the lead role. Why Kumar, who's usually behind the camera? Apparently Kumar looks as If he had sat for the portrait of Bodhidharma.

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▲ Simi's moving tribute to Rajiv: sponsor story



President Gorbachev: receiving short shrift



▲ Sashi Kumar: moving into the arclights

Coincidence doesn't end with the resemblance. Kumar, like Bodhidharma, is from Kodungalloor in Kerala. Moreover, he was also planning to make a film in this region.

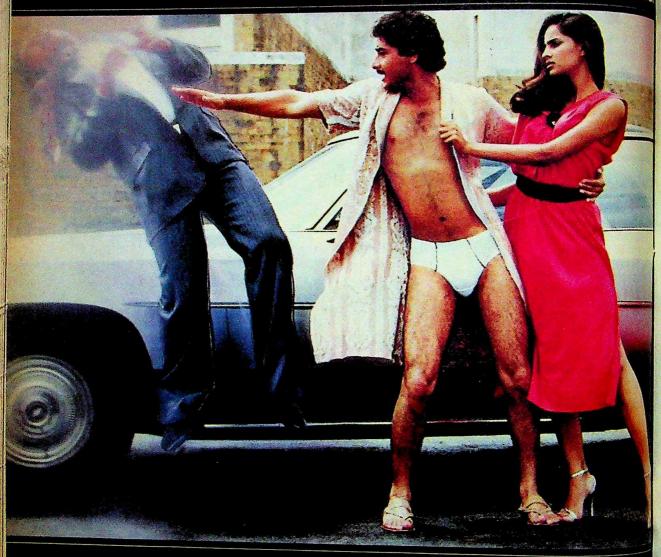
 Hard news seems to be playing second fiddle on pp. The day Sivarasan and Shubha committed suicide after the police closed in on them, the lead item was the 47th birth anniversary of Rajiv

Gandhi. Pushed to third place was Moscow with tanks down its middle. Nearly half the news was taken up by the assorted functions organised for Rajiv's birth anniversary. Though, there were the incidental-or accidentalinsights. When Shankar Dayal Sharma handed over HMV's cassettes of Rajiv's speeches to Sonia Gandhi, she indicated that they should be given to Narasimha Rao. The prime minister demurred: she first. Eventually, Sonia held the package briefly and then passed it on to him. Who inherits Rajiv's official mantle is still not clear. But the protocol was decidedly blurred on the candid pp camera.

 Barely had the head-on clash between the Government and the media over newsprint petered out into an agreement that the Film Federation threw down the gauntlet at the Government over the proposed 56 per cent hike on raw stock: no stock. no new songs for Chitrahaar-no new films either. And DD without the song and dance shenanigans is like food without salt. This music is, if not quite the food of love, the best Pied Piper leading people to the tube.

-MADHU JAIN

If you think this is stretching things a bit too fa



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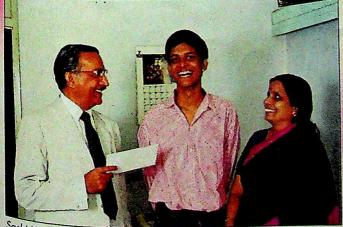
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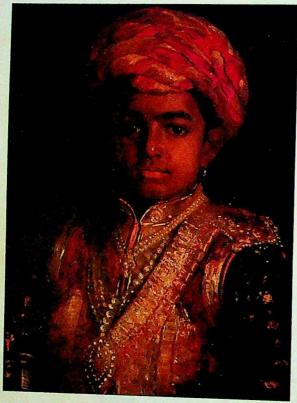
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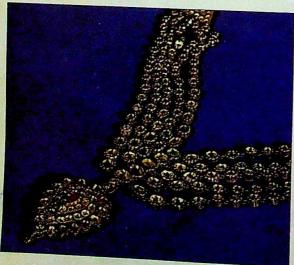


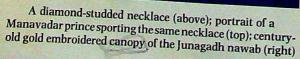
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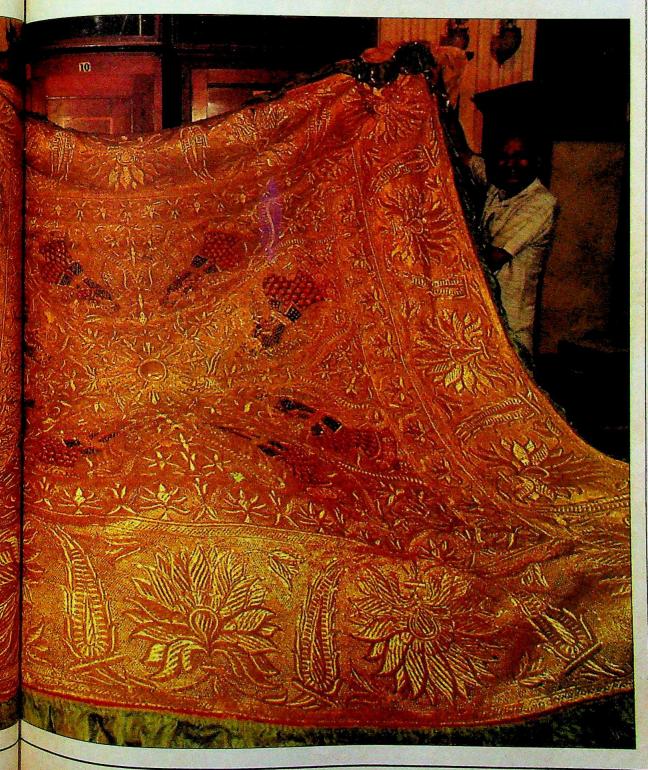








Inside two musty rooms in Junagadh, lies the treasure of four rulers of Kathiawar. Worth crores, it has lain there since Independence, untouched. The Gujarat Government has finally recognised the significance of these invaluable relics and plans to use them to promote tourism. An exclusive report by Senior Photographer PRASHANT PANJIAR and Senior Correspondent W.P.S. SIDHU, the first journalists to see the treasure.



E are at the end Distizadibly. Anyor Sengall Folus dalicoh Cl door-the last that stands between us and the fabled Junagadh treasure—is opened. We enter the dingy and dusty room in the Junagadh treasury. The solitary naked bulb reveals stacks of boxes. The normally affable collector, J.N. Singh, is tense. But Balubhai Bhatt, a former official, is indifferent. He is the only one there who has actually seen the valuables before. Silence descends and tension mounts as Bhatt removes box number 3 from one pile. But its key cannot be found. We wait. Someone nervously drums his fingers. The key is located and the box opened. Bhatt picks up a white khaki potli from the bunch and unties it. With exaggerated caution he extracts its contents: a pair of gold bangles studded with gems. Glum-faced Mohanbhai Lodia, the government-approved evaluator leaps out of his stupor. He snatches the bangles and excitedly rubs them on his kasauti, peers at the smear, and pronounces: "Pure gold. Twenty-four carats. Made locally. About 100 years old. At least Rs 1 lakh. But the artistic and antique value could be ten times that!"

And this is only one of the 164 jewellery items in that box. Buried in an assortment of over 50 boxes is the treasure of four rulers of Kathiawar, which has not seen the light of day for nearly half a century. It includes exquisite pieces of gemstudded gold jewellery such as anklets, bracelets and necklaces, antique Rolex watches, expensive Parker and Shaeffer fountain pens, imaginative silverware and a variety of other collector's items. These once adorned the royal personages of the erstwhile state of Junagadh and its three vassals-Manavadar, Mangrol and Sardargarh. Most of these relics were crafted by artisans of Kathiawar working under royal patronage between 1850 and 1915 and represent a traditional



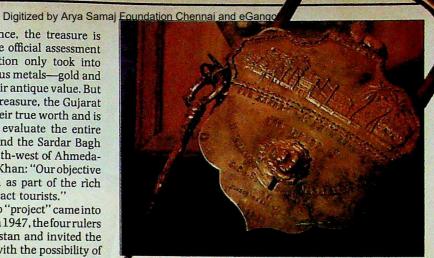
(Clockwise from above) Junagadh-crafted music-box; tea set; Rolex watches; ceremonial silver lock; ICI conservator Alok Kumar with some of the Sardar Bagh palace riches.

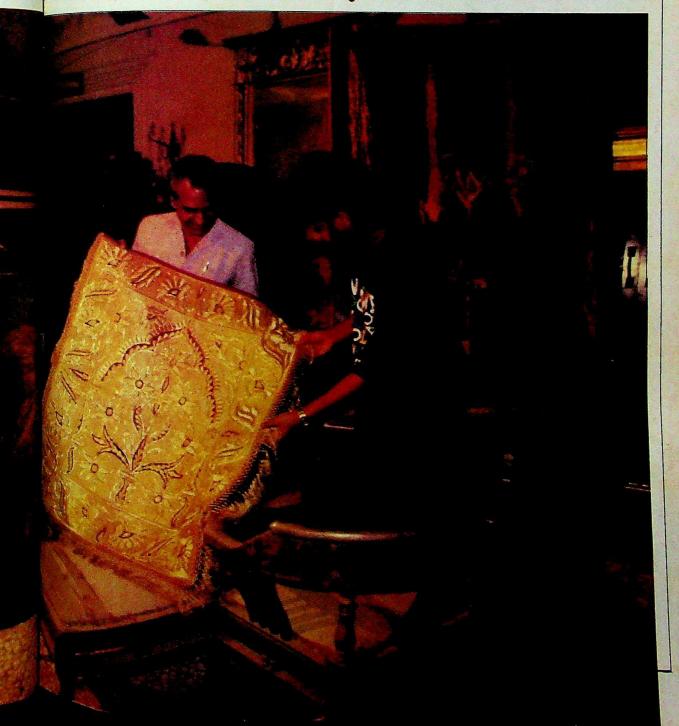




tyle that is virtually extinct today. Digitized by Arya San Aside from the historical significance, the treasure is Aside from the historical significance, the treasure is work crores of rupees according to the official assessment work rores of rupees according to the official assessment and in 1980. However, this evaluation only took into make in 1980. However, this evaluation only took into make in 1980. However, this evaluation only took into make in 1980. However, the precious metals—gold and arount the intrinsic value of the precious metals—gold and are used for the artefacts and not their antique value. But the saling a concerted effort to properly evaluate the entire making a concerted effort to

The treasure that Khan is now keen to "project" came into ficial hands soon after Independence. In 1947, the four rulers takinawar decided to accede to Pakistan and invited the trath of the Indian authorities. Faced with the possibility of







military action, they fled to Pakistan leaving behind most of their valuables—except for the Nawab of Junagadh, Mahabat Khan, who in a well planned operation used his DC-3 'Dakota' aircraft to ferry across his more precious jewellery.

Most of the fabulous gold jewellery was the property of Gulam Mahyudin Khan, the ruler of the 260 sq km state of Manavadar. And the bulk of these artefacts were used by Manavadar's Fatima Begum and eight-year-old Muhamadan Babi. The chiefs of Mangrol, Sardargarh and Junagadh left behind a large number of exotic silver artefacts including bathtubs, hookahs and music box tea sets, all of which were made locally. According to the evaluation done in 1947, soon after the treasure was acquired, and the more recent one in 1980, the silver artefacts of these states weighed over a ton.

'N addition, Junagadh's royal family left behind a large number of textiles-canopies, carpets, prayer mats, and a variety of around 3,000 sarees, none of which has been evaluated. Recalls Hershad Kumari Verma of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and a member of the royal family of the neighbouring former princely state of Nawanagar: "The begums of Junagadh were rarely seen but they were known to have the finest clothes, including Chinese silk, French georgette and brocades from Benaras." Almost all of these have been dumped in the barricaded central hall of the Sardar Bagh palace, which also houses an Ayurvedic research institute and hospital.

Since the rulers fled, the relics have remained in the treasury and the Sardar Bagh palace, without being properly evaluated or appreciated. Perhaps, one reason for this indifference is that none of the rulers made a claim and the Indian possession of the treasure was never disputed. Says Junagadh

They felt that since it had been lying around for so long, ak power station more years would make no difference."

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Begum's

Sardar Bagh, once the official residence of the Junaga nawabs, is today in a sorry state of disrepair. Its palatial room clockwise where royalty once resided, have been converted into medianeses; cur consultation rooms. The intricate mosaic floor made of red

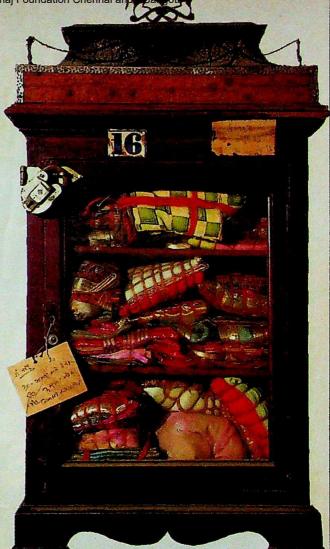


Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai an white tiles, is severely chipped. The paint is peeling off walls and the ceiling is lined with cobwebs. In the centre of hewalls amuse the centre of decaying piece of vintage architecture is a high ceiling whose windows have been boarded with wooden planks, whose what which planks, which houses a large part the Junagadh treasure—mostly the silver artefacts and therves the Durbar Hall museum's Curator P.V. Dholakia, as the district officials break the seal and unlock the wooden for: "If the treasure is still there, it will be because of the race of God."

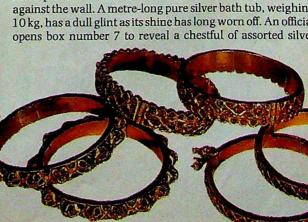
HEdoors creak open and pitch darkness shrouds most of the room, despite the sunlight pouring in. In the shadowy light the outline of some items becomes clear. the collecte in S-shaped silver-plated lover's sofa, the silver model of a so long, at ower station, a damaged portrait of one of the Junagadh nlers and a pair of solid silver baba-gadi (toddlers ambulators).

alatialrocatockwise from right) Cupboard stuffed with children's linto medianesses; curator Dholakia points out necklace in Fatima made of the Begum's portrait; and jewellery worn by the begum.

he Junaga



Someone flicks on the light switch. Nothing happens. The electrician is called. He patches up a connection and a naked yellow lamp brushes away the darkness revealing a row of glass-paned cupboards stuffed with colourful sarees and dresses. The pale yellow paint on the walls is, surprisingly, intact. But cobwebs have spread over most of the chests and cupboards. A thick layer of dust covers all the items. A pile of silver-plated stools, boxes and water coolers are stacked against the wall. A metre-long pure silver bath tub, weighing 10 kg, has a dull glint as its shine has long worn off. An official opens box number 7 to reveal a chestful of assorted silver



Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Chennal items. According to the official records, this chest alone contains a total of 424 silver items. Says Verma: "Junagadh has been the cradle of all cultural development in the area and its products are unique."

But the piece de resistance in the stuffy, dust-laden room is the golden canopy of the Junagadh nawab. Carelessly folded atop a pile of carpets, the canopy measures 2.5 metres by 2.5 metres, when fully spread. Made locally during the last quarter of the 19th century, the gold zari royal canopy bears ample testimony of the deft workmanship of the local artisans. It also provides evidence of Hindu influence. For instance, the centre of the canopy, has eight black and red motifs depicting

Radha and Krishna dancing. And despite being so old and ill maintained, the canopy has not lost its lustre. While its intrinsic value is put at a conservative Rs 5 lakh, O.P. Aggarwal, the director-general of the Lucknow-based Indian Conservation Institute (ICI), and an expert on textiles, feels it cannot be priced. "It is an irreplaceable work of art." he asserts.

The Gujarat Government, which has also veered around to this opinion, has made a start by seeking the help of INTACH experts to preserve

and display these artefacts. Elaborates collector

Singh: "Textiles are being given top priority. First we will conserve the valuable textilesto display them. Then the silver and gold items will be systematically tabulated and physically verified to decide which items can be given to the museums."

But there are indications that it may already be too late. While the silverware has suffered little

damage and can be polished backto its original glitter, the textiles may not survive the onslaught of the dreaded insect, the silver fish, which attacks both silk and woollen cloth. There is evidence in Sardar Bagh to show that silver fish may have damaged at least 40 per cent of the textile items. Says Alok Kumar, senior conservator from the ICI who made a preliminary study of the textiles: "We have to work immediately on these itemsto

prevent them from rotting away." Fortunately, the golden zari items are virtually intact as they are immuneto silver fish attacks. Similarly, humidity-also extremely dangerous for textiles—is under control.

Clearly, the task of restoring and preserving this priceless Kathiawari heritage of days gone by is an onerous one. According to one estimate, a four-member team of textile restorers could take up to five years to complete all the work The Government may have woken up much too late to preserve these invaluable relics of a past era. But a major

portion of the country's rich cultural heritage may still be saved.

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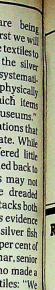
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Ingenious local innovation: silver-plated water cooler

(above); Junagadh's Durbar Hall preserved as a museum.

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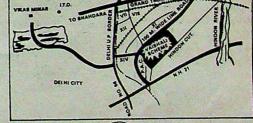
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FAMILY COURTS

A Legal Labyrinth

Special courts for marital cases come a cropper

OR a whole year, V. Shantamma, 31, had done the rounds of the Bangalore civil court in search of justice. A poor shop assistant, she had been thrown out by her husband along with their two-year-old daughter as she refused to accept his second marriage. But her pleas for redress went

unheard. And the case was repeatedly adjourned.

Just when Shantamma had given up all hope, the Family Courts Act was passed in 1984. Her case was transferred to the new family court which promised speedy justice. But today, she is still waiting, thanks to the glaring loopholes in the courts' functioning.

In fact, Shantamma's is just one of the 1,901 cases pending with family courts in Karnataka. In Tamil Nadu also, thousands of pending cases were transferred to the first family court set up in Madras in 1988. But the euphoria died quickly.

The Act-passed after persistent demands from women activists-aimed to dismantle tedious legal procedures. There were to be no open court proceedings. All cases were to be in camera. Above all, it aimed at dispensing with lawyers. And the basic approach was to be changed-from the adversarial to conciliatory.

But the elimination of lawyers has created an uproar among them. Although the Act stipulates that family

courts be set up in every area with a population of over 10 lakh, so far only 18 have been set up in seven states and notifications have been issued to to Goa, Sikkim and Delhi. Yet, the move is being resisted by lawyers. Besides affecting their personal incomes, the system does not really work. Says Sudha Ramalingam, secretary of the Women Lawyers' Association: "Iflawyers are to be kept away from family courts, first the procedural formalities must go."

A common complaint is that the Act was hastily cobbled together without consulting major women's organisations. It was then passed in a single day-as a result, several loopholes remain. "In the absence of definite

ilustration by JAYANTO COU

AIMS

- No more tedious legal procedures.
- All cases to be held in camera.
- Lawyers to be dispensed with.
- Shift to conciliatory approach.

DRAWBACKS

- Only 18 courts set up in seven states.
- Procedural formalities continue.
- Counsellors are rarely qualified.
- Women's organisations not consulted.

rules, how can such courts be allowed to function?" asks R. Soundararajan, a Madras advocate. Besides, although the Legal Aid Board deputes a lawyer to assist litigants free of charge, one lawyer for the scores of people coming in every week is far from adequate. Worse, Section 13 of the Act takes away a party's right to engage a lawyer to conduct the case.

The Act has also failed to make counselling mandatory before hearing a case. In an effort to reach a settle-

exerted—usually on the woman—to adjust to the marital situation, however bad it may be. Also, the counsel. lors are rarely qualified people. Says lawyer Geetha Ramaseshan: "There are no professionals among the counsellors. And every three months the faces change. The first time you come to court, one counsellor handles your case; the next time, there's a new face."

Counselling has other drawbacks as well. Cases have been dismissed because the parties did not wish to divulge the reason for divorce. Take the case of Rekha and Kannan. The

couple filed for a mutual consent divorce in the Madras family court this year. It was refused five times by the judge as they didn't give their reason for wanting to separate. Said Rekha: "Something ugly happened in our lives. We wanted to break with the past." But finding the judge unrelenting, a distraught Rekha confessedher husband had attempted to force her into sleeping with his friend. The judge immediately granted a divorce.

Despite flaws, family courts have certain advantages. Setting up a court to deal solely with marital disputes enables speedy disposal of cases. Of the 10,000 cases filed in the Madras family court, 7,000 have been disposed of. And in maintenance cases, the judge can attach salaries and retirement benefits. Notably, regular metropolitan courts in Madras realised only about Rs 40,000 per month in maintenance cases compared to Rs 5 lakh realised now. Says Justice B. Krishnaswamy: there's a check, husbands will think twice before ill-

treating their wives." Another plus is the easy access to legal aid.

But in practice the flaws outnum ber the advantages. Lawyers continue to capitalise on the ignorance of clients and secure as many adjournments as possible. Clearly, the patchwork solutions envisaged by the Family Courts Act leave much to be desired. For the Shantammas and Rekhas, the question remains—is there really a way out of the legal maze?

-KAVITHA SHETTY with B.V. UM

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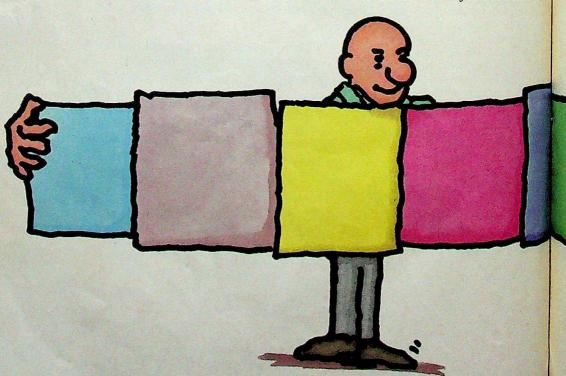
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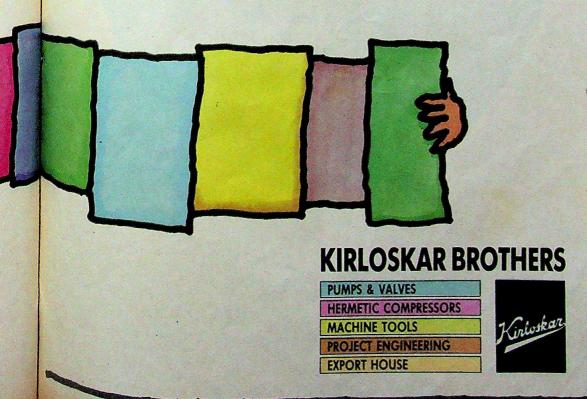
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Looting Misery

farthquake relief for colleges misused

HE politicians of the flood-ravaged Mithila region of north Bihar are known for harvesting hreecrops every year: rabi, kharif and relief. So it wasn't unusual when an atra crop came their way in the wake of the earthquake that devastated the region in August 1988.

What is new is they may not go sot-free as in the past when the sate rulers came from the region. Recently, Minister for Secondary iducation Ram Chandra Purve creand a flutter when he stated in the Assembly that the Rs 8.99-crore Central aid to repair damaged eduational institutions was mostly penton buildings which either did

mexist then or were not damaged in the earthquake. The minister was reponding to persistent queries followig Congress(I) MLA Mahendra Jha lad's question on the non-repair of a shool. A similar report was given Farlier to Chief Minister Laloo Prasad laday by the administrators of Bathhanga and Madhubani districts, be worst sufferers of the earthquake. A sampler of the planned loot of ands routed through the Human Assource Ministry, then headed by Nagendra Jha:

L.N. Mithila University (LNMU) has allotted Rs 20 lakh-for the unstruction of a new geology debriment and a road within the Compus. Neither has materialised it Instead Rs 80,000 has been repairing' the quarters of clerk who happens to be the rother of a politician.

Nagendra Ahavidyalaya (NJMM) in Darbanga was allotted Rs 14 lakh henthough it had neither a buildnor any land in 1988.

Darbhanga's M.K. College, undemaged, is using the Rs 11.75kkli grant to add new blocks.

Ram Niranjan Janata College a Madhwapur in Madhubani distict spent half of the Rs 4-lakh Bant on the As a company of the As a company on repairing fake damages.

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Roy's college was allotted Rs 14 lakh though it had neither a building nor land in 1988—one case in many.

Incidentally, only a fraction of the Rs 44 crore asked for by the then government of Bhagwat Jha Azad for relief had come from the Centre after the quake, which destroyed or damaged 1.49 lakh structures and claimed 284 lives. Then HUDCo had offered Rs 20 crore for repairs of dwellings.

But as Mithila is the battleground of Nagendra Jha and former chief minis-

GLARING GAFFES

- Even though mainly the Mithila region was quake-hit, educational institutions elsewhere too received funds.
- LNMU, the epicentre of Maithili politics, and its colleges got the lion's share, Rs 1.4 crore of the Rs 2.11 crore released initially as relief.
- Nagendra Jha and Jagannath Mishra misdirected the funds to strengthen their political base.
- Many colleges have been misappropriating the money to add new blocks.

Principal R.K. Roy and the new NJMM building: welcome booty

ter Jagannath Mishra, they tried to ensure that the largesse went to their favourite institutions, LNMU, the epicentre of Maithili politics, was the top beneficiary. That hasn't stopped Vice-Chancellor J.P. Singh from forming a committee to begin construction work to check the plunder by politicians.

In NIMM's case, its Convener Jibach Jha says they'd asked for Rs 13 lakh for the college building. The post-earthquake decision was evidently influenced by the position of the person it is named after. But when Mishra replaced Azad as chief minister, the funds meant for it were diverted to three colleges which were not even in the original list of damaged buildings.

Furthermore, though the entire state wasn't rocked, the funds were spread out and arbitrarily. Out of the Rs 2.11 crore allotted immediately, LNMU and its colleges got over Rs 1.4 crore while Bhagalpur University got Rs 16 lakh, Bihar University Rs 5 lakh, and so on. Very little was left for the schools.

'We are looking into the whole matter," Yadav said. A House committee will probe the bungling. And Purve has promised that the guilty officials would be punished.

Unfortunately, the state's track record doesn't inspire hope. No official or politician has ever been punished in such cases. The Yadav Government would forget its brave words and another round of floods would come bringing in the next relief crop for the politicians.

-FARZAND AHMED in Darbhanga

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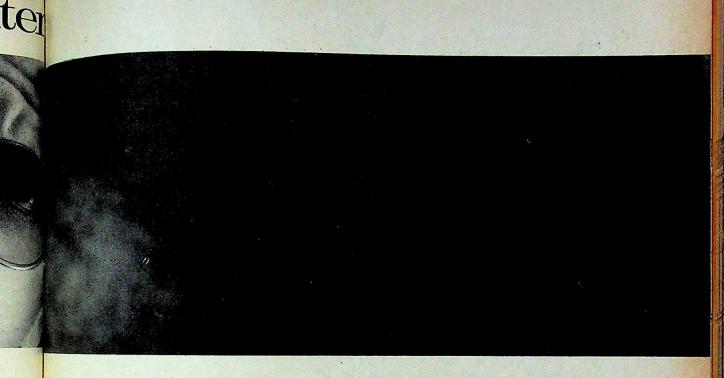
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Both bottom feed and real feed are possible with the 930X, and s cut-sheet feeding without having to take the continu stationery out of the track Feeding of paper and rell of paper is at the touch of a button! Now if this is uncanny, what i

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distance runner with a downing printhead life of over 500 on strokes! But who needs

kind of printing except perhaps a printing press!

The unfair advantage of font cards!

The 930X offers a variety of standard fonts. Moreover there's a slot near the front panel which eagerly takes on a font card besides the standard ones. Now that's hitting other printers below the



Compatibility? It looks like conspiracy!

The 930X is available with IBM and EPSON ESC/P Emulations. Plus, it offers the unique option of an EMULATION card which compatible makes it with a host of other systems. Now isn't that taking compatibility a bit too far?

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TUTORIAL COLLEGES

School for Success

Big money in private tuitions across Kerala

TTINGAL may be a small town near Trivandrum with just three recognised colleges. Yet this one-horse town boasts over 40 tutorial institutions. Attingal isn't the only one with tutorial colleges parallel to the government-recognised schools mushrooming across the state.

The figures tell the story. There are over 8,000 tutorial colleges in Kerala. employing around 25,000 teachers, through which over eight lakh students pass each year. Most of them are nothing more than education factories, Says D.G. Balamohanan Thampi, vice-chancellor of Kerala University: "The boom is tremendous. Socalled educationists here have more black money than industrialists.

That's not surprising as the infrastructure required to set up a tutorial college is basic: a few benches, blackboards and some space. Moreover, no

"There is so much demand that we can afford to have a few thousand more tutorial colleges."

A.M. JOSEPH Secretary, Parallel Colleges Association licence is needed. Already 5,625 colleges are registered with the All Kerala Parallel Colleges Association. Says association Secretary A.M. Joseph, a parallel college owner himself: "There is so much demand that we can afford to have a few thousand more.'

The reasons for the boom are simple. For one, regular colleges are closed for most of the year due to strikes. Secondly, there aren't enough seats in recognised colleges. Most importantly, there is big money in tutorials. Teachers charge between Rs 1,500 and Rs 2,000 per student for each subject.

THE BOOM

- Over 8.000 tutorial colleges exist in the state.
- Around 25,000 teachers are employed in these.
- 5,625 colleges are registered with a parallel colleges association.
- Over eight lakh students pass out annually.
- Teachers can charge tuition fees up to Rs 2,000 per student for each subject.

George in his cramped class-room

And this income isn't taxable.

The fact that government college teachers aren't permitted to take private tuitions doesn't deter them. Ad mits Thampi: "More than 50 per cen of our teachers either teach at tutor colleges or take tuitions at home. And we can't do a thing as there's n government directive." Worse, she dents often fork out all the money for an education that's no better than the at the government colleges.

Meanwhile, the tutorial college carry on unhindered. One of the pi neers was the Our College started 1951 in just one little room. In 1989th two partners-Balakrishnan Nairan Achutan Nair-split the Rs 50-lakh education empire. Today, Achutanop erates a parallel college exclusively for women in Ernakulam from a live storeyed building with an elevator

But the uncrowned king of the education empire in Kerala is BS Bhasi, the president of the Universal Group of Institutions. Started as a job oriented coaching centre in 1975. Un versal has carved a niche in the conpetitive exams coaching sector, with its turnover crossing the Rs 1 cross mark this year. Another big success story is the Vishwabharathi, Calicui oldest parallel college. Started by Cl George in 1963 with an investment Rs3,000 and 350 students, todayitha a turnover of over Rs 4 lakh. Board Principal George: "While education being prostituted in most places, lose the best to my students.

Also raking in the big money Menon and Krishnan, a college i Ernakulam. Started in 1967 by Saft kara Menon with less than Rs I lakil today its turnover, according Menon, is in "six digits above five as a government teacher. Today 1855 all maintain two core maintain two cars and zip across i globe. I'm enjoying life.

-ANAND VISWANATHAN in Trivando

"The boom is tremendous. So-called teachers have more black money than even industrialists.

D.G. BALAMOHANAN THAMPI Vice-Chancellor, Kerala University lass-room nent college to take prir them. Ad h at tutoria home. And e money for er than tha ial college Bajaj brings you a range of Balal birigs you a lange of suns humbaries and hoping systems Internations or street hatting institutions or street hatting In Or Moustness, commencer In Strategy or street lighting om a live n elevator cala is BS 1975. Uni in the comsector, with Rs 1 cross big succes Each made to our own As well standards. As well demanding standards. Standards of the Bureau of Indian should be to the Bureau of the Bureau o college in Oper lighting

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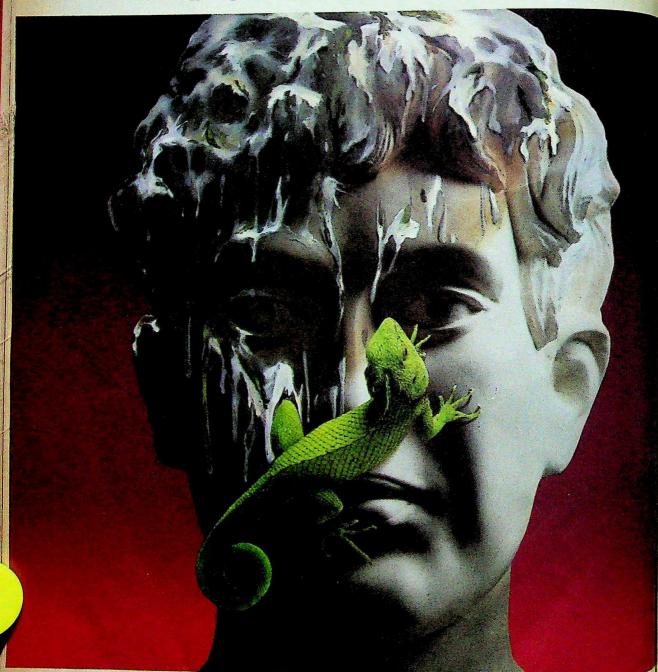
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STRANGE AND TBLIME ADDRESS AMIT CHAUDHURI einemann, UK nges: 209; Price: Rs 616



THE new discipline of inter-galactic sociology has recently come to an interesting conclusion. It has established that the twin armpits of the known universe are Patna and Kanpur. This discovery has

geatly disappointed the people of Calnutta, who felt that their city, which las Flury's, would take the cake. Apprently what went against Calcutta's tains to Ultimate Foulness was the sadvantage that their dung-heap

metimes smells sweet. life the best kind of gobar, Chutta's garbage conins the mysterious insedients which nurture owers. Satyajit Ray, Airad Chaudhuri, Mother Ieresa, the Metro, Amitav thosh. And now the latest

EXCERPT

boy holidaying with his relatives. He is silent and spectatorial. He notes and narrates the daily business of living with the most intimate, amusing and meticulous detail. His relatives converse with each other in the routine and affectionately aimless way common to every Indian family. Or they lie around being massaged by underlings. Or they watch pigeons. Or push-start a senile and recalcitrant Ambassador. Or say their prayers to a baroque pantheon in their prayer room. Or, like all decent Bengali bhadralok, sing Rabindra sangeet as their only aesthetic outlet during moments of excessive sentimentality.

And in their rooms the servants come and go, talking of mishti and roshogolla.

The little boy listens, observes, and digests it piecemeal as the food of his holiday. Then he transforms it all into prose which is, at different times, quietly touching, ironic, funny, and always beautifully controlled. This is the sort of writing that cannot be improved. Nor, within the genre of imaginative and sensitive description, can it be bettered. And for people who want

to keep a clear Brahminic distance from pollution, Chaudhuri's book, like Ghosh's The Shadow Lines, is the best and safest way of experiencing Calcutta.

Yet there is something like a tragic flaw within the volume. Not even the



Amit Chaudhuri

THE baby thought spectacles were made to be eaten and chewed and Probably digested. When Sandeep borrowed Chhotomama's wrist-watch loreflect a miraculous dot of light on the wall, she gaped respectfully. Once, When she began to cry, Sandeep held a tumbler of water against the light, and showed her the rays of light that darted in the water like tiny fish; the baby became silent, and leaned forward peculiarly, as if she were ready to change her religion.

the bud to poke its head out of that bish dump, Amit Chaudhuri.

A Strange and Sublime Address is title-novella of this collection of thes. The novella itself comprises 14 and the plers. These can almost be NIDA VO as fourteen individual stories, for heedle that runs through them is breadbare. They are all exquisitely nafted vignettes of ordinary everyday k in an upper-middle class family ing in Calcutta, to whom almost othing 'happens'. The protagonist is a little Bombay

advantage

best descriptive prose-writer can sustain one's interest over 200 pages with neither a story-line nor a plot. The nuances of daily life are good for 50 pages: they might stretch to 75. Beyond that you get into the anaemic bloodlessness of Anita Desai. Chaudhuri's movements-origins in Calcutta, research in Oxford-exactly match those of Amitav Ghosh. So does his prose. To be a full-fledged novelist, he only needs to become One Authorin Search of a Story.

RUKUN ADVANI

Curious Pitch

Work on Ranji fails to hold

PLAYING THE GAME

by IAN BURUMA Jonathan Cape Pages: 234; Price: Rs 616



IAN Buruma's charming and curious first novel is about cricket, colonialism and culture on the Indian turf. An unnamed narrator. evidently Buruma himself, travels to India to visit the birth-

place of one of cricket's most magical heroes, K.S. Ranjitsinhji. A dapper figure in a silk shirt, all flashing eyes and flashing willow, Ranji (1872-1933) was one of the game's all-time greats and the first non-white to play for England. Buruma, a Dutch-born

Briton, is fascinated by how Ranji, like Oscar Wilde and Benjamin Disraeli, became an English hero without being quite English enough. Ranji once described himself as "an English cricketer and an Indian prince", but as Buruma succintly observes: "As an English cricketer he behaved like an Indian prince, and as an Indian prince, like an English cricketer.'



Buruma: flawed but original

Playing the Game is an exploration of this duality. It is an account not so much of Ranji's life, as of the narrator's attempt to understand Ranji's life. Buruma pursues the memory of Ranji in a melange of genres-impressionistic reportage, travelogue, biography and memoir, all lightly dressed up as fiction. His narrator visits real places and interviews thinly-disguised real people: most of the novel's "characters", if they can be called that, are wholly recognisable, from the late Dhiren Bhagat to Ashis Nandy, with cameo innings for two nonagenarians. Nirad Chaudhuri and the Trinidadian Marxist cricket-analyst, C.L.R. James. Buruma's only substantial invention is an autobiographical letter of Ranji's. implausibly discovered amongst the papers in his room and interwoven with the narrative.

Indeed, the book's strengths are not novelistic. There is no plot, no dramatic tension, no suspense, no great descriptive flair. Instead, Buruma seems to be using reportage to explore what cricket did for colonialism and to it, and in turn what colonialism, exemplified by the triumph of cricket, did to the culture of those who were colonised.

He doesn't quite pull it off though. The limitations of his fragmentary method never allow Buruma's book to rise above the level of journalistic divertissement. The author's encounters and travels do not carry the imaginative charge to support his ruminations. Stylistically, the device of Ranji's fictional letter, with its Edwardian tone and its profusion of cliches, is-while skilfully done-unequal to the situations it describes. Some attempts at historical irony seem contrived (as the young Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi behaves with duplicity at a fictional cricket match). Though some ideas are discussed with sensitivity and elegance, they are often unconnected to any event or episode in the book. As a result, the narrator's thematic aspirations-at the end he thinks "of the illusions of empire and (of) how they were still with us"-are never fully realised.

Buruma does not make enough of his central character, Ranji-cricketing genius, reckless spend-thrift, shameless Anglophile, callous ruleran extraordinary amalgam of the virtues and defects of both the English gentleman and the Indian prince. Such a man cannot survive the passing of the British, and the abiding image from the book is of Ranji in his decline, sitting alone at night, with his dark glasses on and only a parrot for company, listening incessantly to a record of Ella Shields singing "Burlington Bertie".

Ranji's world is gone, and its relevance to Buruma's contemporary meditations on culture and self-perception is debatable. For cricket still flourishes in India. It is played not by the princes to whom the British taught it, but by the sons of India's middle class, the products of a nationalism Ranji despised. There is story there; and on the evidence of this flawed but original and engaging book, Ian Buruma might just be the man to write it.

-SHASHI THAROOR

Fun Fare

Simple, frivolous fiction

SWEET CHILLIES by BALRAJ KHANNA Constable, UK Pages: 267; Price: Rs 616



PARTAKERS of Indian cinema would vibe well with this book. Especially those wide-eyed gawpers of the front rows who find in the 70 mm peccadilloes, failures and triumphs of a mean-street Bach-

chan, a vicarious vindication of their own sad lives. Sweet Chillies has the appropriate masala: a rags-to-riches story, a spunky irreverent hero (whose recurring erection is somewhat insanely referred to as 'cock-a-doodledoo'), fantastic fortuitous coincidences, the play of morality, and prurient sex.

Sweet Chillies is a sequel that starts exactly where the earlier Nation of Fools left off. Khanna's 20-year-old hero Omi, who in the earlier book renunciation will leave him no time! wrestle with his wife. Some meander ing pages later, dramatic tension again invoked through a trivial cour case. Omi and Khatri win, and mor meandering pages follow-with Khanna even bunging in that ultimate cliche, a sex-gorged swami holding whites in thrall.

The last sections of the book as devoted to Omi's attempts to become millionaire (not so inconsiderable ambition considering it is still the ear '60s). As in Hindi films, prior to t happy denouement, calamities bela the good guys in all of a cluster, B everything ends well, with Mun even delivering a son, and the famil signing off as in old Shammi Kapon starrers with a happy family portrait

Khanna tells a simple story simple but in his brace of novels there lies kernel of achievement. One, that h brings to life Chandigarh (as it was but more importantly that he capture



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Khanna: light touch

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This wrestling was a new sport. The young couple had taken to it like monkeys to trees and played it every afternoon. As usual, they had joined up their two palangs to make a large square arena. On it they tugged and pulled each other by the limb in all sorts of locks and tackles and tangles, huffing and puffing and roaring. Overhead the ceiling fan whirred.

helped his father Khatri grow from a vendor of sweets to a posh restaurateur, returns home to Chandigarh amid fanfare with his bride Munni, and then proceeds to become deliriously infatuated by her. Many many pages are devoted to their cooings and their wrestling bouts (no exaggeration: salubrious Punjabi pastime that).

Then dramatic tension enters the plot as Khatri declares his intention to renounce the world and retire to the ashram of Gokul Swami. This is swiftly foiled by Omi, alarmed that his father's

to a degree the distinctive Punish speech rhythms and idiom, and gung-ho Punjabi spirit. Here, writer's finest creation is Paro, On mother, a woman caustic of tongu indomitable of spirit, and generous heart. What irritates most about Khanna's books is his need to pander the western reader, resulting in some translations and explanation with the most ludicrous being: laddu was a popular sweet, the size of golf-ball." Not quite par, Mr Khani —TARUN J. TEIP.

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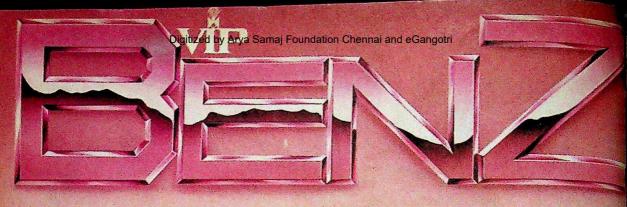
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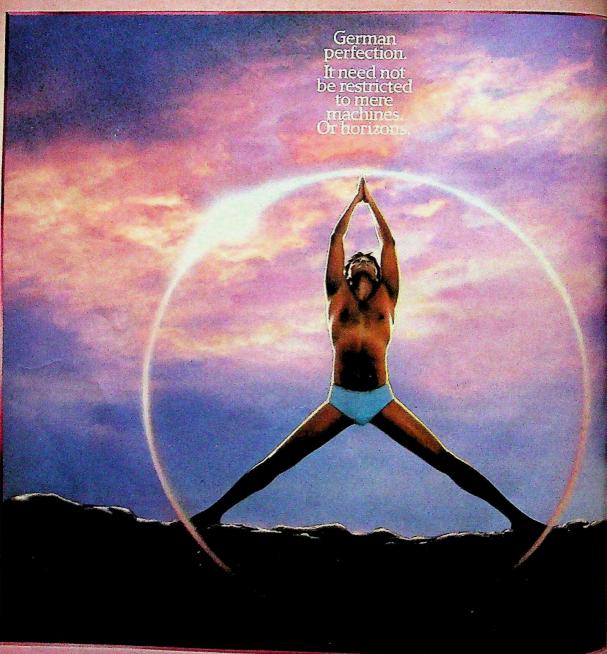
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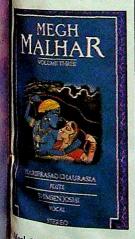
TRADDH TRIBUTE SANDHI KHAM (HMV CVa's mus Rajiv, The gare bad, streeth

More than Rajiv Gandl

HISTORY THE ARAB SPEAK-PEOPLE BY AL-HOURANI (Faber Faber; Rs 160). A quick blarly sweep of the evolunofapeople who since the of Islam have played a vial role in world-strucing. Excellent for those erested in the subject.

NESUM OF ALL FEARS Y TOM CLANCY (Fonana/Rupa; Rs 75). The bestseling writer of ultimate espienage knocks off another winner. But this time the lozels the Middle East since Cold War is over.

usic BASANT MHAR (Music Today; 150 per cassette). Monsoon mispring music is here as



legh Malhar: sheer magic

masters make magic ompelling ragas. A ses of eight cassettes preoling eight greats.

HRADDHANJALI, BUTE TO RAJIV ANDHI BY PARVATI (HMV; Rs 33). The pop dva's musical tribute to The ghazals however tre bad, saying nothing Rajiv Gandhi, Rajiy Gandhi'.

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PRATIKAAR (Directed by T. Rama Rao; Starring: Madhuri Dixit, Anil Kapoor, Raakhee, Paresh



Pratikaar: revenge rides

Rawal, Nirupma Roy and Om Prakash). Revenge rides again-and again. This time it's the murder of his father which gets Anil Kapoor going. Even Raakhee's presence doesn't manage to film. salvage the Fratricide, rape. bloodlust-it's all put together, with a

generous dash of masala. to make a typical Bollywood mishmash. Thoroughly avoidable.

RANBHOOMI (Directed by Deepak Sarin; Starring: Dimple Kapadia, Rishi Kapoor, Shatrughan Sinha, Jeetendra and Neelam). Nifty role-crossing in this directorial debut. Jeetendra and Shatrughan are positively roguish in this stereotyped curry eastern. Innocent Rishi Kapoor—just like his daddy—meets the baddies of the big city. Dimple plays the, well, dancing girl, Neelam the village belle. True to style, all's well that ends well. Tired formula but it's good to see Shatrughan being bad once again.



OSCAR (Direction: John Landis; Starring: Sylvester Stallone). The tale of a '30s mafia don, 'Snaps' Pravaloni (Stallone), trying to go straight, is the setting for this snappy comedy, with crisp, side-splitting dialogue. Adding a twist are professional hit-men pretending to be butlers, a 'propah' English don and an illegitimate child who flit in and out of the Pravaloni mansion. Good entertainment to beat the blues.



LING'S PAVILION (Colaba; Bombay). A

touch of the exotic comes with the up-market Ling's Pavillion, run by the Nanking management. The mundane chicken chow mein or sweet and sour prawns are out-instead on the menu are spring rolls wrapped in rice paper and sea cucumbers.

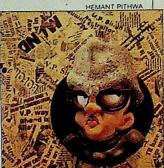


Ling's Pavilion: classy fare

CROISSANTS ETC. (Vasant Vihar; New Delhi). The delights of a Parisian side-walk cafe can now be savoured in Delhi-albeit with a dash of Americana. Started in Bombay, Croissants etc. offers the capital reasonably-priced Ummburgers. And, yes, a variety of croissants.

AND CARICATURES SERIGRAPHS BY AJIT RAO (Pundole Art Gallery:

Bombay). Bizarrely sculpted terracotta faces capture the

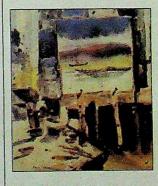


Caricature of V.P. Singh

quirks of politicians, film stars and sports persons. Deserves a look for its novelty.

RECENT WORKS BY SUBRATA KUNDU

(Vadehra Art Gallery; New



One of Kundu's works

Delhi). Kundu's deft handling of water colours in evidence here. The works are full of whimsy although the lines at times are ambivalent. A painter to watch.

IN THE STEPS OF MAS-TERS: OIL PAINTINGS BY BRIGADIER NAN-DAN DHAWAN (LTG Art Gallery: New Delhi). The brigadier's copied the Impressionists. But not even Van Gogh, Cezanne and Manet would recognise these latter-day incarnations of their masterpieces.



Sankalana; (inset) Husain

Homing In

All of M.F. Husain under one roof? Well, almost. Our home-grown Piccasso's put 100 of his paintings on the walls of his new

museum/home called Husain Sankalana in Bangalore. He'll be inaugurating it on his 76th birthday bash on 17 September where partying with himunlike last year with the 'hallo, dahling' crowd-will be children who'll add to the merriment by painting what they like. Says the painter: "I can't afford a wild party every year. But I still feel like a boy. And

with my young friends I can

share the excitement of doing

things." The barefoot badshah's certainly given himself a nice birthday present.

Jazzing Around

 It's show time, folks. For the jazz band Divya, that is. Keyboard wizard Dinshah



Sandhya, Dinshah: show time

Sanjana and his wife, vocalist Sandhya will be playing at the John Coltrane festival in Los Angeles. After their debut album Madras Cafe, the band's allegro pace took it to Denmark, Poland and the Soviet Union. "We've always got a good response," says Dinshah. Now,

that's blowing their trumpet.

Moon Tide

 Now, it's the moon he's out grabbing for. Film director Sawan Kumar Tak-known for his tireless quest for nubile nymphets to star in his

Sridevi: still sixteen?

Chiding Tin

August is card time for the na And this year the master was particul grim. President R. V kataraman those who used "pu funds" as "departme dowry". Something. deed is rotten. "We have to admit that with the profile of progres the expression on India face isn't one of satisfation." Right, Mr Pres dent, nobody's smiling.



Copying Chan

♦ Jackie Chan's got company. In a group of young Indian taekwon-do champs. Whooping their way to victory at the international taekwon-do championship in Sydney were Dheeraj Arora. 12. Lumba, 9, Rachana Chaurasia, 20, and Abhishek Ram, 10.

and low for several months for a teenybooper to pit against

teenage heart-throb

Salman Khan for his film Chand ka Tukda.

Hardly anything in a skirt

and older than 13 escaped the

director's keen gaze while he

was on his nation-wide hunt. But to no avail, inspite of

the advertisements he put

out. After months of scouting around, the buck finally

stopped at numero uno Sridevi-who may not be

quite sweet sixteen but she

still fits the bill. Says Tak:

"She's the only chand ka

tukda that I could think of

Picking up two golds and two silvers, the weenyboppers were on cloud nine. Said little Lumba, barely containing the excitement in his voice: "I love fighting. That is why I even

Taekwon-do brigade

make my GI Joes do taekwi do." His only regret, thou he didn't get to see any garoos or koala bears while Australia for the competition

Well, they could alw boomerang back.





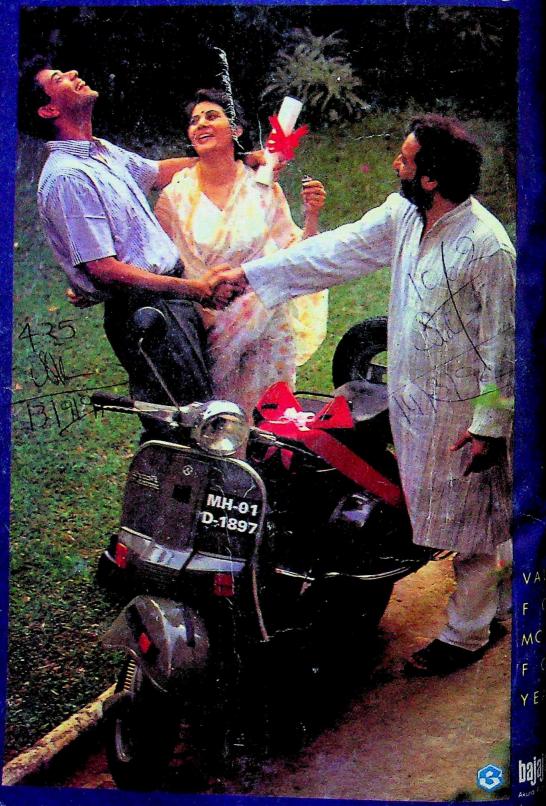
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INDIA
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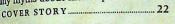
Chief Ele Movin Mizoram Karnatal

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How the World Sees India

The whirlwind changes in the world political scenario have left India lagging far behind, and its recent economic changes have made little impact abroad. A worldwidesurvey reveals the marginal existence of India in global consciousness, shattering many myths about India's pre-eminence.





Saffron Schizophrenia

The BJP is torn between Hindu militants led by the VHP and the liberal leadership of veterans like A.B. Vajpayee and L.K. Advani. It is a question of sticking to the temple issue or of adopting a moderate agenda to increase the party's base. An assessment of the BJP's ideological options.

S	PE	CIA	L	REP	ORT		40
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Jaffna: Inside a Nightmare

Northern Sri Lanka is Tiger territory, a state within a state where the Tamil militant group, the LTTE's writ runs unchallenged. But the war-torn area is now ravaged with shortages, and the Tigers are indulging in hype and propaganda to keep the morale of its cadres high.

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The Great Grab

Out-of-power Jat supremo Devi Lal and his clan under the guise of being rural leaders were actually grabbing land from hapless villagers in Haryana. The Tau and his progeny have left a trail of scandal. Affected villagers recount the rapacity of the infamous political family.

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Body Business

The decline of pottery in Kerala's Aruvacode village resulted in economic ruin and forced the women to take to prostitution. The stories of women plying the oldest profession with the connivance of the menfolk to survive in a ruthless world are stark testaments to human desperation.

SPECIAL FEATURE



The Miracle Man

Ralegan Siddhi, a rural idyll in Maharashtra, is today a model for development experts. This is due to the Gandhian revolution wrought in the life of the villagers by former armyman Anna Hazare. The once backward village is now self-reliant, and the people are rid of alcoholism.

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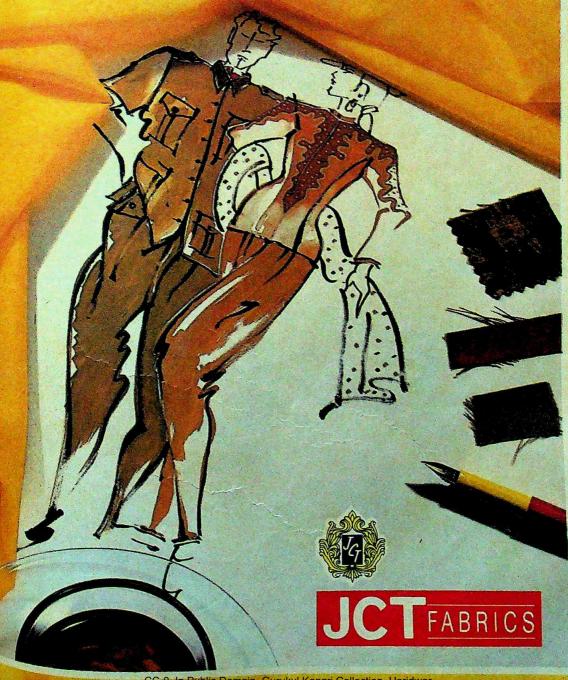
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IT'S GOT TO BE JCT



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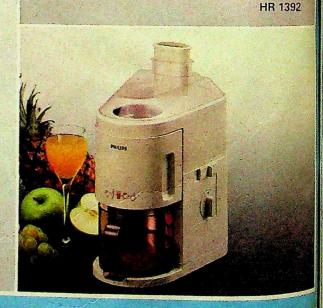
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WANTED OLD AGE HOMES

While you have evocatively brought out the plight of old people in the country "The Greying of India". September 30), not enough emphasis was laid on the need forsetting up old age homes. This is because or schale families become a norm in the dies, there is no other alternative to providing care for the aged.

AKBAR ALI

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

While reading our erudite prime minister's comment following the ill-fated coup in the USSR against President Gorbathey ("End of an Empire", September 15). an Abraham Lincoln saying comes to mind: Better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt. RAM S. CHANDRAN Bombay

■ Theend of communist rule in the USSR is natural and in accordance with the prophetic remarks of Marx and Lenin. They said that the communist state is a temporary institution. Once it successfully suppresses the bourgeoisie, it withers away togiverise to a free state. The Soviet Union is moving in just that direction.

Barapada

1392

g Co.

BAIKUNTHANATH SASMAL

■ Nursultan Nazarbayev was incorrectly referred to as the President of Tadzhikistan. He is the President of Kazakhstan. RAJEEV MAHAJAN

FINANCIAL FRAUD

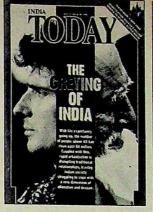
The involvement of our politicians and industrialists in the BCCI ("Murky Indian Deals". September 15) comes as no surprise. In the past too Indian politicians and bureaucrats have been accused hvolvement in kickbacks in scandalous deals like Bofors and the HBJ pipeline. Bangalore

The BCCI had earned a bad reputation for keeping accounts in fictitious names, helping narcotics smuggling, terrorist activities and laundering black money in several countries. But it is not known why our finance minister turned down the demand for a probe by a joint parliamentary committee. The guilty should not be allowed to go unpunished.

G. CHANDRASEKHAR

THE IRON LADY

Jayalalitha, the charismatic chief minis-Jayalalitha, the charismatic cines ... tenor amil Nadu ("Down to Business", September 15), means business. The way she is tackling. tackling the LTTE menace is really commend-



The sum total of human happiness remains constant. Increase life expectancy, and you get lakhs of old people suffering loneliness.

Kapurthala

P.K. CHOPRA

Today the old feel unwanted by their families. Children should care much more for their aged parents to dispel economic and emotional insecurity.

New Delhi

D. SINGH

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able. The lady does not believe in double-talk like other present-day politicians.

Chandigarh

DHIRAI CHHIBBAR

VALIANT WOMEN

The womenfolk of Kashmir deserve due appreciation for the brave front they have put up against the security forces posted there ("Challenge of the Veil", September 15). They have withstood tremendous emotional torture at the hands of the previous government in the state and by the high-handedness of the security forces.

Jammu Tawi

BHUSHAN BAZAZ

NATIONAL NOD NEEDED

The BTP and its allies should not think that Uttar Pradesh's mandate is enough to start constructing a temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya ("Temple Trauma", September 15). It is a national problem which concerns all. It needs the approval of the whole country, which the BIP failed to get in the 1991 general elections. It must realise that Indians will not tolerate this kind of religious chauvinism.

Hyderabad

G. NAGESH

PUBLICITY STUNT

The interview with Gurbachan Singh Manochal ("We will not budge an inch", September 15) did not reveal anything new about the aims and attitudes of the militants but only served to further their interests. If militants are starved of publicity, they will an endangered Unfortunately, the importance of this basic psychological factor does not seem to have dawned on the media yet.

Lucknow

RAJENDRA N. GOUR

TIME-TESTED TECHNIQUE

Your article ("Poised for Growth", September 15) seems to imply that biotechnology is a new field in India. This technology, especially tissue culture, has been in use for several years in the tea industry.

Bhubaneswar

U. MAHAPATREE

■ Your article did not bother to ascertain whether the Sunflower Hybrid AH 3425 was developed by ITC Agro Tech itself. The hybrid was actually developed by Pacific Seeds Inc of Australia and was only imported and tested by ITC.

Secunderabad

HEMANT NITTURKAR

NO PROFESSIONALISM

What the public sector needs today is not privatisation but professionalism ("The Big Burden", September 15). Most public Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri, at upholding the honour of the

sector organisations today do not have a chief executive to run them professionally. And where the post of a chief executive does exist, they are political appointees and usually incompetent.

Hyderabad

AJAY MALHOTRA

NOT A BAD IDEA

The so-called hare-brained scheme. proposed by the NRI Foundation India, to salvage the forex situation ("Business Briefs". September 15) is an excellent idea and deserves serious consideration. Mere operational hassles should not make us unnecessarily wary.

New Delhi

R.S. DASTA

POLITICAL VACUUM

In a country where widows, daughters or mistresses of dead politicians and film stars become leaders ("The Sonia Factor", August 31), an inexperienced Italian woman can only be an improvement. How is it that in a land of over 84 crore people, no other political leader can be found? No wonder the world does not take Indian politics seriously.

London

FATIMA SULTAN

■ The politicians who have been singing Sonia Gandhi's praises are not genuine admirers of the Gandhi family but have a vested interest as their own prospects are at stake. They want to use her as a tool in achieving their selfish political objectives. C.K. MANI

WHY WOMEN ONLY?

The killing of the two women in Rattangarh in Haryana ("Death Row", August 31) is most brutal. If it was really

surprise to see a writeup in INDIA TODAY on chess, a game with Indian roots, in which V. Anand is in the world's top ten.

SANJAY SHARMA



Though Karpov was able to edge out Anand. he was made to sweat it out till the very last game. Undoubtedly, it was a superb and classic performance on the part of Anand.

Kurnool

P. SIVARAM PRASAD

village, the men involved should have been killed as well.

Rajahmundry

TATINENI SAYEEJE

PULP PEDDLERS

While I have no sympathy for the incompetence and corrupt practices of the money managers within the Government of India, I certainly have no stomach for the booksellers' pleas for clemency ("In a Bind", August 31). Over the past decades what have these connoisseurs of good reading been importing into India: Perry Mason, Jackie Collins, illustrated editions of the Kama Sutra?

London

SHREERAM VIDYARTII

NO GLASNOST

I have learnt that Doordarshan has decided to bar Prabhat Patnaik, but not me from appearing on TV ("Teletalk", August 15). Being against censorship in general, I would suggest that if the Government is really keen on showing up the fallacies in Patnaik's arguments, a better strategy would be to ensure that every time he ison TV, so am I.

Delhi

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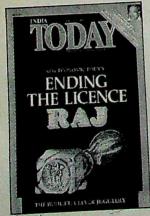
BEING EXACT

Jagmohan wants to know where and when the remark I had attributed to him ("Wages of Manipulation", August 31) was made. It was made at Raj Bhavan in Srinagar after the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah in 1984. Jagmohan has every right to change, modify or clarify his views. But it is unfair to impute, as he does, that! have concocted the quote.

Iammu

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BALRAJ PURI

Bombay.

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Singapore

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On their incentive trip to Singapore, India's leading executives were happy to meet the strangest people. The Singapore Gid¹⁰ the picture treated them to a delicious Chinese delicacy. They also enjoyed the attentions of an amorous Orang Utan at a cocktal

party in the zoo. And they indulged in a delicious Rijstaffel at Alkaff Mansion presented by ten maidens. Let

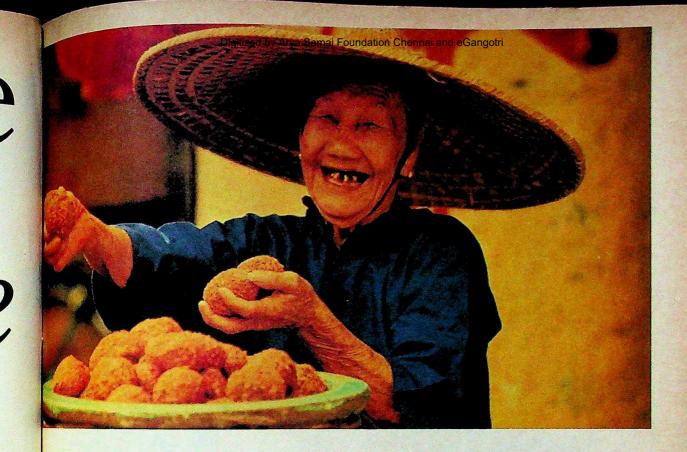
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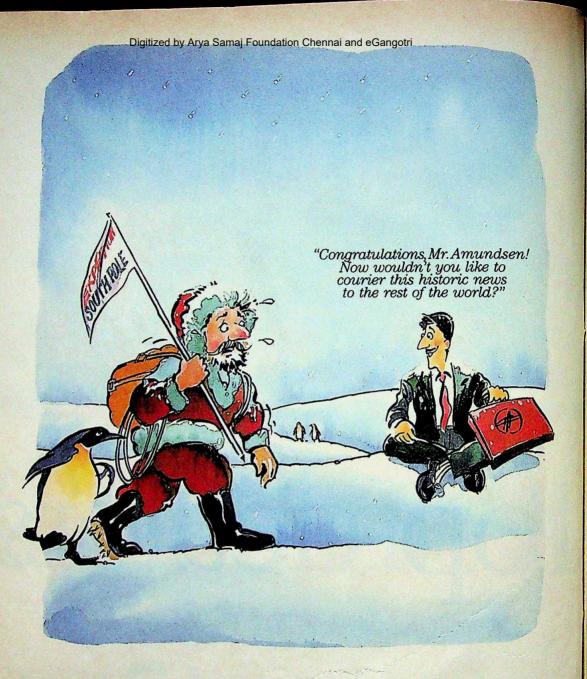
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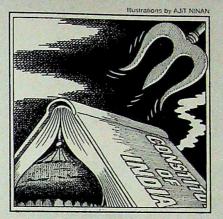
Time for Restraint

THE passage of the Places of Worship Bill by the Lok Sabha was a step that was better late than never. By stipulating that all religious places shall be maintained according to their status as of August 15, 1947, the bill accomplished more than just the aim of stalling the BJP-VHP combine from making more claims under the law to convert mosques, allegedly built on Hindu temples destroyed by Muslim rulers, back to temples. The bill has a deeper symbolic significance: it is a renewed recognition that 1947 was a watershed in the country's history,

adateon which the nation began its journey towards a tryst with modernism, secularism and religious tolerance.

That the Ayodhya shrine has been left out of the purview of the bill is no surprise. The technical excuse is that the matter is now already in the courts. But the more important reason is one of realpolitik. To have included Ayodhya, after the bloodshed it has already caused, would simply have given the BJP-VHP another ready opportunity to mount a bloody agitation. Also it would have precluded all future attempts to arrive at a negotiated settlement of the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute.

The new legislation, however, does not automatically



ensure that all agitations over ownership of religious shrines will be blocked. And nor can the Congress(I) claim moral superiority in defending its bill. After all, it was this party that unlocked the gates of the Ayodhya shrine in 1986 and then exploited it as a Hindu religious issue during the shilanyas there in November 1989. So the new bill is really a belated meaculpa. And it should serve as a good starting point for all reasonable men and women from the BJP and the Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC) to negotiate an out-ofcourt compact on Ayodhya.

In fact, L.K. Advani had himself stated earlier that if the BMAC was willing to give a little on Ayodhya, his party would not agitate for other shrines at Varanasi and Mathura. But the hotheads of the VHP are on the warpath again, not only condemning the new legislation but also planning a new movement to "reclaim" other holy places. With the economy in a shambles, political instability stalking the land, terrorism on the rise, and law and order breaking down, it is now incumbent on the BJP leadership to exercise moderation and restraint in the national interest instead of getting dragged into fundamentalist struggles that can only tear the country apart.

Damaging Complacency

ITH a good and bountiful monsoon now in its last phase, the country can look forward to a record kharif crop for the third successive year. A good monsoon not only helps to irrigate crops but also has the long-term benefit of dampening inflation and pumping in new purchasing power in rural areas which are increasingly becoming viable markets for the products of the nation's industrial infrastructure.

The bad news about a good monsoon is that it fosters a sense of complacency. During a drought year, the papers are full for tital

year, the papers are full of articles and reports from experts on the need for stepping up irrigation and good water management to drought-proof the nation's farmers. But the moment the rains arrive all such talk and advice is dumped onto the backburner and the most basic problem that plagues Indian agriculture comes nowhere near resolution.

The dismal fact is that with a good monsoon here and there, the country simply lucks out from one year to dent agriculture is on the depressions in the Arabian Sea improvements in farm yields during the past two decades,



the small farmer—74 per cent of all farmers have less than two hectares of land—has still not attained economic self-sufficiency. This goal can only be achieved through extensive inter-cropping as well as the flexibility to grow cash crops.

Abundant water, whenever the need arises, is critical for success in these areas. But except in regions served by extensive networks of canals, there is no guaranteed irrigation system. The tubewell networks are now rapidly failing to provide water because of massive electric power shortages. There is,

however, an alternative: the diesel pump. But there is still no concerted drive to maximise its use.

As the Government continues with its drive to modernise the economy it is crucial—in the absence of optimum power generation—to encourage the use of diesel pumps. This should be done by giving fiscal and loan incentives, disbursing loans to village cooperatives to set up sprinkler systems, and even encouraging private companies to establish farming services and repair facilities. All this, of course, would have to go hand in glove with ensuring that no farming area is denied easy access to diesel supplies at any time of the year.

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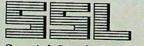
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Breeding Problems

• State municipal corporations, unlike India's mosquitoes, are agitated about a bureaucratic delay. A requested clarification on the import of anti-mosquito



fogging machines has been gathering dust in 'babuland' for ages. Meanwhile, the flying fiends are breeding like. well, mosquitoes.

Items imported under OGL as R&D are normally exempt from customs duty, and municipal authorities want a similar exemption. But New Delhi's recent import restrictions threw a spanner in the works. In fact, six months of shuttling to Delhi broke no ice with the apathetic Centre.

Meanwhile, Jaipur's municipal authorities fear the worst. They even considered importing fogging machines by paying the 200 per cent cash margin requirements or acquiring exim scrips at the ruling 55 per cent premium. But given the financial state of regional municipal authorities, that seems very much an impossible solution.

The Centre's tardiness seems inexplicable. All fogging machine imports are funded by the who under its Malaria Eradication programme. But it is nevertheless true to form. Meanwhile, mosquitoes multiply and in some states people perish.

Stubborn Stance

 The Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), with the power of life and death over many a sick company, now finds its existence threatened. It has been asked to shift out of prime Bhikaji Cama Place to down-market Noida, Delhi's satellite town in Uttar Pradesh.

The board ostensibly does not want to shift to Noida because its distance from Delhi airport would inconvenience senior company executives flying in for the day for hearings. And most of the 150 employees on deputation would return to parent organisations. As a result, the board is doing what its tough, plain-speaking chairman, R. Ganapati,

Cartoons by AJIT NINAN



loves best: digging in its heels, and spoiling for a fight.

Putsch Profit

• They might be felling communism's pantheon in Moscow. But in India the attitude is somewhat different. When Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev installed



an impressive statue of Lenin at Nehru Park in chic Chanakya puri-which also happens to be the diplomatic area-during his last Indian visit, he never dreamt that the metal plaque inscribing his role would become a collector's item. But soon after the botched coup, someone unscrewed the plaque and made off with it. Panicky gardeners and watchmen hunted for hours. but to no avail.

It is unclear whether love for Lenin or Gorbachev, or just straightforward business sense, provoked the vandalism. After all, years from now, the plaque might have considerable antique value. As a jogger pertinently observed: "The Lenin

statue might be shifted to a museum before it is too late to save it!"

Guessing Game

 Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown. Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao should have been happy to briefly escape the politics of the Delhi durbar for the joys of a glorious European summer. But he actually heaved a sigh of relief when he returned from his four. day trip to Germany, his first abroad as PM. The reason. insiders reveal, was his problem in designating someone to mind the store while on his first trip abroad. Should it be Arjun Singh, Sharad Pawar or Madhavrao Scindia? What if something major happened in his absence without a second-in-command?

Finally, retired but nevertheless trusted bureaucrat



P.C. Alexander advised him against formally putting the number two tag on anyone. It would just send the wrong signals. And what better way of keeping ambition in check than to keep everyone guessing. But the problem will recur. Rao is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka next month. How long he can maintain the ambivalence is anybody's guess.

TAIL PIECE

Reactions to the happenings in Yugoslavia and USSR met with mainly delight in the Ministry of External Affairs, known for its love of life abroad. Crowed one officer: "More independent states would mean more embassies and more foreign slots." What they do there is another matter.

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Game

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IVIRS. JUNEJA WOULD HATE US FOR LETTING THIS PUBLIC!

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- The organisation is ad hoc, the issues are ad hoc.
 - AJIT SINGH, on the Janata Dal, in The Hindu
- Amere Union official can prepare a policy paper, throw in subsidy like a bone to a dog and seek to control the states.
 - BIJU PATNAIK in Indian Express
- You can't choose your neighbours. So you have to live with certain problems until you are able to solve them.
 - P.V. NARASIMHA RAO in Frontline
- We are MPs, not terrorists.

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- RAM VILAS PASWAN, on the President's refusal to meet a group of Dalit MPs
- I am a deewana (admirer) of women.

 SUNIL DUTT in Indian Express
- Who dares oppose me?... I am the Robin Hood of Bihar.
 - LALOO PRASAD YADAV in The Independent
- Budget-making is not an academic exercise. It is a political exercise and one has to accept the realities of political life.
 - MANMOHAN SINGH, finance minister, in Probe India
- The Tigers have been used as pawns in the political chess-game being played in Tamil Nadu.
 - V. PIRABHAKARAN, in an interview with BBC
- Hinduism is neither contra-Muslim nor anti-minority.
 - MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI, BJP president, in The Independent
- My body aches if I don't exercise. Training is relaxation.
 - KAPIL DEV in The Economic Times
- Being in Parliament is worse than facing Jeff Thompson, or our own Chandrashekhar.
 - CHETAN CHAUHAN in The Sunday Observer
- Why has the world labelled me a man-eater? I am a vegetarian.
 - DIVYA BHARATI, film actress, in Cine Blitz

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RUSSIAN GOODIES

While their newly-liberated compatriots were celebrating the end of communism in Moscow's Red Square, a group of Russians was inaugurating the era of free market in the Indian capital. Last fortnight, some Russians muscled into an up-market eye-care centre



Digitized by Arya Samai, Foundation Chennai and eGangotri in Connaught Place and under the pretext of looking for spectacles, started flashing their own gaudy gizmos.

Cameras, dolls and perfumes found their way to the table-top and the staff fell over themselves to get a good buy. A pocket camera caught one employee's fancy. He was willing to fork out Rs 250 for it but the

Russians were adamant-Rs 300, not a paisa less, nota paisa more. The camera was sold. Customers at the centre too passed up glasses for goodies and the Russians went back richer by many rupees. This could quite well be the perfect answer to the rupee-rouble trade bind. Is the Indian finance minister listening?

MIXING GANDHIS

In an age of godlessness, any deity will do. At least that was what happened in the case of Rajiv Gandhi's birth anniversary on August 20. In the galvanic rush to genuflect on the occasion, Congress(I) workers at the Nehru Youth Centre in Dholpur, Rajasthan, ran

helter-skelter to finalise the ceremonial paraphernalia. Everything was ready: chairs, an audience and a chief guest to administer the soporific with his speech. It wasn't going to be the greatest show on earth, but at least it would rate a notice in the local daily. It did make news, but for the wrong reason. Because in the madden-



ing melee to be more lovalthan-thou, somebody forgot to requisition a portrait of the late prime minister. So for the mandatory garlanding which inaugurated the memorial meeting, the chief guest ended up paying his tributes to none other than Mahatma Gandhi. One Gandhi at times, one supposes, is as good as another.

KEY STRATEGY

■ Next time somebody tries to lock you out of office. make sure you have the key to the filing cabinet. That's the trick that has made a sub-inspector in Shahiahanabad in Madhya Pradesh a much-sought-after person despite having been fired for drinking on duty.



The officer who signed the sack order hadn't counted on the disgraced policeman taking home a bit of office memorabilia: the keys to an all-important filing cabinet, in fact, which contains records of most pending criminal cases in the area. Till the relevant files are traced, the officers in the police station say, no criminals can be

rounded up. And as the officers cool their heels, they can't even boot out the former sub-inspector who visits the station every day. Yet nobody has been able to get the open sesame mantra from him. Perhaps the policemen need the services of a light-fingered Fagin-like pickpocket to get the key. I you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

EGGED ON

First they told us to eat more eggs. Now the eggs are telling us to eat more pan masala. Last fortnight, residents of south Delhi were surprised to see eggs with the name of a popular pan masala brand emblazoned on their shells. But their ini-

enthusiasm soured when they heard the red ink used for printing could easily adulterate the eggs when broken. Sales took a downturn when news got around that the eggs could also leave heady after-effects on those unused to the pleasures of pan masala. Executives of the pan masala company



have denied any responsibility, pointing out that as the owners are vegetarians. eggs would not be the me dium of their message. The firm's advertisers too deny either conceiving or egging on the campaign. If anybody else knows, he is not talking Perhaps to avoid getting egg on his face.

A DEADLOCK

■ Sometimes, it pays not to stay long hours in office. Last month, an assistant draftsman in Maharashtra's Irrigation Department was issued a memo by his boss for ostensibly preventing peons from fulfilling their duty. Apparently, the draftsman had



applied for an advance to tide over some domestic difficulties. The request was refused by his superior, who then left office at 4.30 p.m. Hoping to convince him to the contrary, the draftsman stayed on, waiting for his chief to come back. But when the chief didn't make an appearance even till 7 p.m., the

peons left the office open The next day was a holiday so our deserted draftsman panicked, scurrying about looking for the lock and key to shut up shop. He found the lock, but not the key. while his colleagues rested the hero of our piece had lo while away the hours office, sans food or family.

SEASON A Panch

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THE US

"It is an extraordinarily small player in the world economy and will desperately have to figure out a way of making a dent in this direction."

MYRON WEINER, Director, Centre for International Studies, MIT



"India has to walk like it has been talking in the past 100 days."

JAMES CLARK Vice-President. AT&T. New Jersey

"You can't even plug a telephone into a jack in India. And it's largely a nation of words and statistics."

ROBERT O. HILLS, Executive Director, Merck, Sharp & Dohme

"With the decline of the Soviet Union, India can act as an independent and

thoughtful force in shaping the post-Cold War world."

JOHN KERRY, US Senator, Boston, Massachusetts



CANADA

"Now the proverbial Indian tiger may have finally been unleashed."

MARCEL SAUCIER, Trade expert, Ministry of External Affairs, Ottawa

HOW THE WORLD SEES

By RAJ CHENGAPPA



THERE was always a certain smugness in the way India looked at itself. An exaggerated notion of its importance in world politics. Over the years, the nation donned for itself the mantle of the moral and ideological spokesperson of the Lout on cr Third World. And built for its people an illusion temments. of self-reliance and non-alignment.

When the Government recently opened up Bogota, En the economy to foreign investment and laun. Macandida

ched its global export drive, the myths were allowed to persist. There taldeal of p was an air of confidence that world business would make a bee-line to apply the mi Udyog Bhavan. And the Opposition even expressed fears that the apicture nation's independence was being sold to "rapacious capitalists".

Just how badly out of touch the country has been with its image abroad became evident when INDIA TODAY correspondents fanned out to interview a cross-section of people in 15 major countries last fortnight. The myths have been shattered one by one. Instead of a progressive and pragmatic nation, most perceive the country as a trundling rhinoceros. Swathed in tons of red-tape and trapped in a time-warp of its own making.

The much vaunted economic liberalisation drive has gone largely unheralded in most countries. And far from being a Third World leader, the country is looked upon as a fringe player—just another poor nation. The overriding perception is one of a nation that has lost its identity. A country completely out of step with the recent head standing global changes.

Most feel that if India doesn't change fast enough, she faces the danger of becoming a cipher in international affairs. Worse, manyo the countries just don't seem to care either way. "India at the moment does not loom as an important country," says Myron Weiner, director Centre for International Studies at the prestigious Massachusetti Institute of Technology in the US.

True, of late, the world is in a constant fast-forward. And fell nations are able to comprehend and cope with the bewildering rapidity of events. The rolling back of communism in East Europe. The unification of Germany. The Gulf War. Civil strife in Yugoslavia. And more recently the disintegration of the Soviet Union. All these event have captured the world's attention and almost removed the sub-

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from its collective consciousness. Yet, as Tim Mcdonald, ntiment Holds As I Im Mcdonald, Research Institute for Asia and Pacific in Sydney and former actor, Research Institute for Asia and Pacific in Sydney and former rdor, Research of the country, points out: "India was praise high commissioner to the country, points out: "India was where in the new power equations."

Is record in recent international events has come in for scathing Is record in the Gulf, its stance is considered at best vacillating. At st. chicken. It is a bystander to changes sweeping East Europe. It stip-dopped in its reaction to developments in the Soviet Union. To rejor western diplomat, India seems to be not only shooting itself santly in the foot but also stabbing itself in the back.

Parto thereason has been the nation's intellectual and ideological ration that has set in over the decades. In the past, it did arrest Lalatention. First, by waging the greatest of modern anti-colonial orements. Then by emerging in the '50s as a champion of the Nonand Movement (NAM). Its leaders, too, captured the world's and world s d Jawaharlal Nehru was in many ways Mr Third World.

Since then it has steadily run out of leaders with vision and has referred to cling to outdated ideals. With a definite Soviet tilt in the 18 its non-aligned stance was hypocritical. It retained its insular accepted as global trade became the key to development. Only in the o under Rajiv Gandhi did it recover some of its progressive image dwas even perceived as a regional superpower.

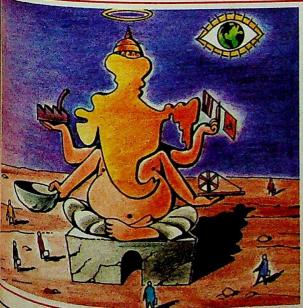
Butthedomestic upheavals of the past three years have taken their Three successive minority governments. Rising lawlessness. A indufundamentalist revival. Another brutal assassination. Several while the prime ministers. Result: India's international image has ness in the tien a serious beating.

A NATION OF PERMANENT CRISES

WDAY, much of what the world sees of India is largely the stuff put lout on CNN broadcasts: strife, violence and highly unstable mments. It has an image, an expert says, of a "nation in manent crisis". Even in distant Colombia that impression persists. Rogota, Enrique Penalosa, a member of the Colombian Congress dacandidate for mayor of the city, says: "It seems a country with a taldeal of political violence and corruption. I even fear a possible how the military in an attempt to keep the country together." Most inta picture of a nation that is Hobbesian in nature: hardly any by either in politics or in daily life.

lts self-imposed economic and thereby largely political isolation

ers by AJIT NINAN and JAYANTO







JAPAN

"Indian politics is like a pendulum. There are big and small swings but no extreme ones. Democracy will survive."

HIROSHI MATSUMOTO, Associate MD, International House, Tokyo

"Progress in India is steady. **But certainly** not quick."

TAKEO FUKUI Director, Honda, Tokyo



"India has to think more of what the buyer wants and not what it wants him to buy."

> T. YAMOUNICHI, Senior adviser, Okura and Company, Tokyo



"The recent economic reforms have not been spelt out fully."

S. SHIRAHAMA, Head of Japan External Trade Organisation

SINGAPORE

"India is marginalised now in global negotiations. It is not part of Europe. It is not part of the Asia that's growing. And it does not have the buying power of North America.

It is just out somewhere floating in the Indian Ocean."

JIM MAXWELL **Head of Business** International



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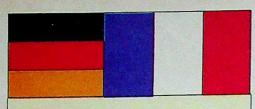
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GERMANY



"Full competition has to come. It is a must, It will hurt the country tremendously if it pulls back now."

> **VOLKER JUNG, Senior Vice-**President, Siemens, Munich

"If democracy fails in India, it will affect the world."

GISELA BONN, Editor-in-chief, Indo-Asia German Broadcasting, Bonn



"I would pick up a pair of shoes made in Brazil but not if it has an Indian tag. What India lacks is good marketing."

PETRA SPRICK, Housewife, Bonn

FRANCE

"One can't even say how India is perceived here. She's simply not



known in France. The ignorance is absolutely amazing."

VIOLETTE GRAF School of Advanced Studies, Paris

has seen old stereotypes of the country persist. In Japan, for instan India is still regarded as a "land of curry, elephants and Buddha"; Susan Ainsworth, an industrial relations officer in Sydney, most had watable by of India as having LOTS of people and talk of a starving populace drought and disease. Even neighbouring Pakistan thinks Indiak poorer and more corrupt than it is. And in South America, India remembered more for Mother Teresa's work than anything else

Another image is all-pervasive. That of a nation tied up in know an omnipresent, hide-bound bureaucracy that throttles all initias As a result, foreign investors are sceptical about the Government being able to implement the recent economic reforms. Big busines all too tired of listening to successive prime ministers promisliberalisation. "We are not forgetting," says Jim Maxwell, chiel. Singapore's Business International, the powerful consulting firm is the same old bureaucrats who have to implement the policy.

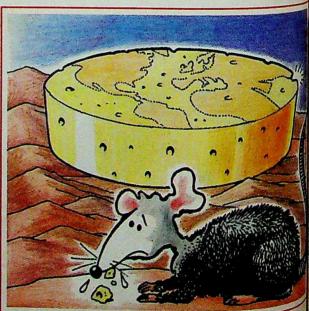
NO BIG DEAL FOR BUSINESS

THE Government's detractors may be shouting themselves have mentanti-ex L about the nation being sold to the International Monetary For global marke (IMF). But most countries in the world think that the nation's politicemany for i leaders are to blame for selling the people short for decades. The bousiness, In accuse them of chanting the mantras of self-reliance and Fall funtry to de socialism despite knowing that these had failed to develop the count and meet expectations. The fear, as an American businessman po- all attracts l out, should really have been over "the domestic hand".

Whether Zimbabwean, Brazilian or French, most welcome India bid to spread its wings. Only a few point to the dangers of the nat-tuntry's tec being exploited by foreign business. Others feel that the reforms we not just late in coming but ill-timed and inadequate. Five years a they say, foreign investors may have been interested. But today, the have multiple choices for investment: South-east Asia. Former bloc countries. The Soviet Union. Even Latin America is opening

Businessmen are in fact watching the changes in India only in the corner of their eyes. They feel there is still not enough being for them to turn and take a good look. In Tokyo, T. Yamounichi, see adviser to Okura, a trading company, says: "Nobody is going to" in. People are waiting for a consolidated picture to emerge."

Many of the businessmen interviewed seem to have been deep scarred by India's "famously hostile" attitude in the past. Things, the say, begin to go downhill the moment they arrive in India. Whether long rain sell arguing with customs officers, battling with the poor infrastructure of the



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for instant and the standard of the standard o change sweeping the rest of the world. Even a large country up in know the US realised quickly that it could not operate as an economic all initiated and by insulating its economy for several decades, India now finds Government far behind in the technology race.

Geomparable countries, both China and Brazil come out much rs proms grathan India does. The old men controlling Beijing may be afraid of well, chief restriction and the global market especially to th ducts in the global market, especially to the US, than India has Direct foreign investment in China now totals \$ 22.7 billion, hile India's stands at \$ 0.5 billion.

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Part of the reason is the image India projects to the world. With its selves how plant anti-export bias, it has never carved out a niche for itself in the onetary in dolad market. While Japan is known for its electronics industry. ion's politicimany for its precision tool manufacturers, the US for its freedom to lecades, The business, India has only been regarded as a prickly and problematic e and Fatiguntry to deal with.

op the country aggressively marketed itself or its products. It essman por all attracts largely the rucksack tourists and not too many of the elcome India conventional exotica and mystic image but failed to project the of the natiountry's technological achievements.

TODDLER IN GLOBAL MART

Mact, India's image as an exporter is either non-existent or Former Lagative. The "made in India" tag seems to have no pulling power s opening where in the world. If anything, at times it spells lack of quality. log feel that Indian business suffers from an inferiority complex. In gh being a segobal market, they usually prefer to piggyback on someone else's unichi, sed land-name. The result is that India accounts for barely 0.4 per cent of going to total world trade.

It is not as if everybody is dismissive of India's economic e been der therements. Developing countries like Brazil and Tanzania still laud e been day.

Things by Sala's progress in industry and agriculture. They point to the nation's industry and agriculture. They point to the nation's industry and agriculture and the salar success.

Whether the salar success of Indian the nation's image is bolstered by the success of Indian usinessmen abroad.

Most are surprised over why India, despite its vast natural sources and skilled manpower, still remains a poor nation. In Paris, the Gaucher, deputy director of Dassault Electronics, the avionics leels India should have been an Asian tiger long before other Indias. The tight grip the Government has over all spheres in dan life is seen as the major hurdle. It has kept India's entrepreneurserius always on a suffocating leash. The recent economic reforms Other: Arrays on a sunocating least. The control of the Indian genius to blossom.

Other images filter through. Of the nation's schizophrenic attitude wealth. With Hindu religion preaching asceticism as the stater goal of life, the pursuit of money becomes almost sinful. There also a feeling that Indians have psychologically not got over donalism. Indians are perceived as having a defeatist attitude that them overly critical of all achievements. And gives them a single that the rest of the world. There are not good enough to match the rest of the world. There are other less flattering insights. Of India as one big debating the Market Anation of the Less flattering insights. dety. A nation of words and statistics. And a reputation for not being the limplement of words and statistics. And a reputation for not being beto implement things. Indians are regarded as a people who think Probable. and Probably too hard. And also seem to be constantly on an edge. and also seem to be constantly of the country spends too high time fair. Desnite tripping up the other person.

Despite all the bad blood, foreign investors are unlikely to keep out Indiafor long. Most have their eyes on India's consumer boomers— Rowing middle class and thereby domestic market. Also unlike in



BRITAIN



"Dismantling all state activity would be dangerous."

TERENCE BYRES, Head of Economics, School for Oriental Studies, London



"To become an economic power, get rid of excess bureaucracy."

ERNEST MANN, FAO Consultant, London

USSR

"We think of India as a source of moral and spiritual succour."

MASHA FILOTAVA Moscow student



"Because India is democratic, it is more capable of absorbing separatist tendencies."

ERIC KOMAROV, Professor, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow





THE THIRD WORLD



"You have a vision of the future evident in the planning process. India will progress."

> N.C. MAKOMBE, Speaker, Parliament of Zimbabwe



"Indian people on their own have tremendous potential."

EDWARD LOWASSA, First Vice-President. Tanzania

"India's role as a spokesman for **NAM** has lost its raison d'etre."

B. LAMOUNIER, Sao Paolo Institute of **Economic & Political** Studies, Brazil



"There is still need for a careful economic policy to protect what has been built up."

ENRIQUE PENALOSA, Candidate for Mayor of Bogota, Colombia

"Indian products are valued abroad. We import a lot of machines and equipment."

OLA ADEFEMIWA, Nigerian High Commissioner, India

East Europe and the Soviet Union, India has a far more develop financial establishment and better market infrastructure. And recently its credit rating with international organisations and isd repayment record have been excellent.

Moreover, it's not political instability that worries investors. would be satisfied if the economic measures remained stable desp change in regimes. A point the current government seems to be aware of and takes every opportunity to stress is that the reforms ushered in are irreversible.

Many countries would invest for other reasons. India is viewed kev manufacturing base in South Asia that could also be used topole goods when the African market grows. Germans, despite preoccupation with the unification, are still keen on developingle into what an investor calls "a bridge-head". The Japanese haven same idea. And the French for long have been wooing India to be major business partner in South Asia.

Positive signals have also come from leading fund organisations like Aid India and the IMF. Last fortnight, India had problem in securing a whopping \$6.7 billion loan at the recent We Bank-organised Aid India consortium meeting in Paris.

While foreign aid might flow, to get private investment Indias has to prove that she finally means business. This she on demonstrate by rapidly clearing many of the foreign projects pend for years before the Government. By keeping inflation under chair avoid the wrath of the voting public. And quickly tackling anarchic law and order situation.

SHRINKING INTERNATIONAL STATUR

INDIA'S poor international economic standing is going to beam stumbling block in the post-Cold War order that is emerging Economic muscle is gaining as much might as military. The mi actors in the international economy will now determine gli political relationships. And only those with sufficient economical would command respect and be able to pursue an independent political policy.

All this is clearly unsettling for India. In the past it played then superpowers against each other and benefited. The decline of Soviet Union has seen the loss of a major ally. And thanks to minuscule global trade it hardly has any economic clout. With Second World almost disappearing, its moral posturing on The World affairs is likely to be a thing of the past. India's foreign policy adrift in deep waters.

But the current leadership hardly perceives it. Despite the st decline in the influence of NAM, India still harps about its grow relevance. Even as a propaganda force, NAM today doesn't carry weight it used to. The Argentinian pull-out from the movement fortnight has not caused many alarm bells to go off in South Blo

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs says it will continue relationship with the Soviet Union. But it has made no serious effort the past to cultivate Boris Yeltsin or the emerging republics. We the Soviet Union now treats its relationship with India on a part Cuba-a real burden.

Its image as a regional superpower is also taking a battering. from bungling in Sri Lanka, its continued belligerence with Pal and Bangladesh are all perceived as signs of an 'irresponsible rep bully". While the rest of the world is moving towards trading blo has made no effort to mend fences with its immediate neighbours make saarc a reality.

Plagued with internal problems, its influence over the regularity thought of as diminishing. Its ability to influence the countries of the c international affairs beyond the Indian Ocean is almost nonexts And India now finds itself bunched along ignominiously with Third World countries. But its developing brethren continue to high regard for the nation. Countries in South America and continue to see India playing a major role in the future too.

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But with developed nations, India will find herself increasingly gair with conflict for other reasons. In the emerging world order, rans-national issues like drugs, terrorism, nuclear armament and latellectual property rights are going to be key determining factors. bid sunbending stance on the nuclear issue and refusal to respect intellectual property rights are viewed as major hindrances in developing bilateral relations with powerful western nations,

It is not as if all is lost. With the break up of the Soviet Union. Washington is clearly worried about the formation of a giant Islamic wastung. Or a grant Islamic with Pakistan have soured considerably over the nuclear issue. And breign policy experts see a much closer Indo-US relationship. Also if Germany and Japan emerge as alternative sources of power, India will sill be on a good wicket.

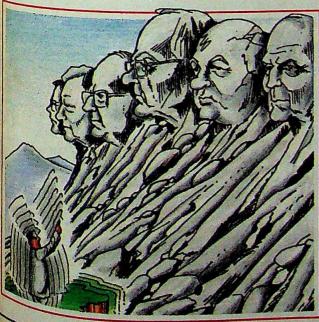
Experts also point out that Indian foreign policy has always been reactive rather than pro-active. It has never really aggressively pursued its goals with other nations. Nor has it learnt the art of lobbying. Its diplomats would have to seriously begin to sell the nation's image abroad. Abid Hussain, India's ambassador to the US, is dted as a good example. He not only openly advocates capitalism for the nation but also actively lobbies for proposed projects of US multinationals in the country.

Overall, the verdict on India's foreign policy is harsh: the nation's presence in key international fora is no longer a necessity. India now needs the world more than the world needs India. Most people, however, point out that the world can hardly ignore 850 million people or one-seventh of humanity. However, strength in numbers is hardly an image that India should be proud of.

RAUCOUS BUT SECULAR DEMOCRACY

THERE are, however, several silver linings that salvage India's battered image. Whether it is the US, South America, Australia, Europe or Africa, a majority of the experts feel that democracy in India stibrant and will survive. In Washington D.C., Senator John Kerry, a werful Democratic Party leader, says: "The factionalism that has long existed within India cannot be viewed as unique or abnormal. I am convinced that the vast majority of the Indian people retain their tespect for democratic institutions and values."

While most are shocked at Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, the orderly transition of power is cited as an example of India's democratic strength. However, there is hardly any interest in Indian politicians





THE GULF

"A large country like India just cannot be ignored in world politics today."

TARIQ AL MOYAED. Minister for Information. Bahrain



"During the Gulf crisis, India showed a total lack of leadership. It did not take a stand till much later. And it did too little too late."

HESHAM AL SAYED, President, Gulf Business Federation, Dubai

AUSTRALIA



"It has to shed its confrontationist policies and work with the spirit of cooperation in the region."

TIM MCDONALD, Director, Research Institute for Asia and Pacific, Sydney

"A leader, not from the Gandhi family, with initiative could turn India around."

SUSAN AINSWORTH Industrial Relations Officer, Sydney





NEIGHBOURS



"India is perceived as being more corrupt than Pakistan at the lower levels. But at higher levels, it lust pales before Pakistan."

HAMEED HAROON, Deputy Chief Executive, Dawn, Karachi

"Unless national aspirations are respected, it will be difficult for



India to remain united in its present form."

LT. GEN. S.Z.A. ZAIDI . Head of Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad

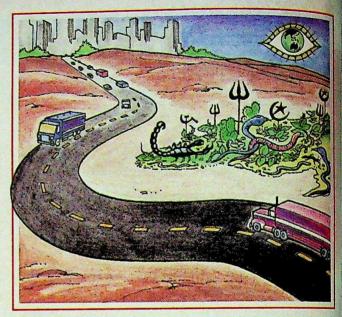
"We are the two most crazy nations in the world. We need to do some rethinking on our relations."

> LATIF AHMED KHAN, Political science professor, Karachi

"It can help the region grow into an influential economic power."

NEELAN TIRUCHELVAM, Director. Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo





especially after Rajiv's death. Many cite the lack of a charismatic statesman like Nehru to lead the nation. But the move to draft Sonia Gandhi as prime minister has brought scorn and is dubbed as a "signof political immaturity".

Despite the success of the BJP in the recent elections, India's secular credentials are still largely intact. The rise of Hindu fundamentalism doesn't draw any parallels with that of Islam. Unlike in Muslim countries. Hindu activists have never been demanding a return to a theocratic state. And developments in Punjab and Kashmir are not thought of as serious enough to dismember the nation. Neighbours like Pakistan, however, think the nation is packed with Hindu chauvinists and sees them as a danger.

The other plus point is the cultural confidence provided by an ancient history that very few nations can match. Its traditional mysticism and spiritualism has always been attracting new followers. the latest being young Soviets in Moscow. In the past year there has been a run on such books available at stores. And many streets in Moscow are full of Hare Krishna dancers and youth sporting medallions of Swami Chinmayananda or Ma Nirmala Devi.

More importantly, the past three months have been a humbling and learning experience for India's policy-makers. Finding that the expected investment wasn't pouring in, the Government has decided to go aggressively out and garner business for itself. Last week, P. Chidambaram, minister of state for commerce, was in the US "wooing" big business, telling them that "we no longer feat multinationals or foreign investors". As a symbolic gesture, the Government has cleared several pending tie-ups with US multinationals.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs is busy trying to disengage its embassies from routine political tasks and transform them into economic ambassadors for the country. And Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao himself now talks of moving towards bilateral the ups on economic rather than security concerns.

It is going to be a long and arduous task to set right India's image But at least the process has begun.

-With reports from ARUN CHACKO and AMRIT DHILLON, Londer AMRIT KAKARIA, New York, SHEKHAR GUPTA, Moscow, KANWAR SANDH Islamabad, AMARNATH K. MENON, Colombo, SPUTNIK KILAMBI, Park ASHOK RAI, Tokyo, SALIL TRIPATHI, Singapore, NEENA BADHWAR, Sydden ADRIANNE MORENO, Bogota, LEKHA RAI, Dubal, SATINDRA BINDRA, TOTO OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPER BINA JANG, Hong Kong and SHEFALI BHIMAL, New Des

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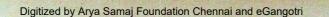


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> Another Day in Paradise Phil Collin

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All LTTE dead are now buried. The ceremonies are masterly exercises in building up war hysteria: complete with armed Tigers and frightened mourners.

JAFFNA: INSIDE

By AMARNATH K. MENON

ETTING to a spot made so familiar by the news beamed from television sets every night should be easy. But it isn't. The only way to get to Jaffna from Vavuniya—the farthest point on the northern peninsula where the Sri Lankan Army writ still rules-is on a packed barge across a dark lagoon. This is the land of the midnight crossing.

Beyond Vavuniya lies Tiger territory. Teenagers armed with Kalashnikovs check identity cards and numbered travel permits issued by LTTE offices. The LTTE post is organised like an international border crossing. Each vehicle is stopped, its passengers questioned. When it comes to my turn, being a journalist provides an easy visa. But not before one of the Tigers issues a terse warning in Tamil to my taxi-driver: "Don't talk or take photographs and go directly to Jaffna."

There are two ways to get there. The shorter, direct route cuts through the strategic Elephant Pass which the army now controls. The other is via Pooneryn. From Pooneryn jetty, it takes barely 10 minutes to cross the lagoon but the longwinding queue of people has to wait for several hours.

The wait is silent. Only intermittent cries of "coffee" and "payasam" shatter the stillness of the night. There is no conversation. Suddenly, an olive-green Pajero draws up, its headlights blazing. It is leading an Isuzu van covered with palm leaves. Lights are switched on inside the van-some people rush to take a look. Seven boys, injured in the ongoing battle in the Mullaitivu jungles, lie on mattresses on the floor They are bleeding profusely. One of them cries out for his mother. But in vain. The onlookers walk away.

Once you finally get to Jaffna, LTTE ideologue Anto Balasingham and Secretary of the LTTE's political wind Yogaratnam Yogi veto a visit to Mullaitivu. If one is allowed elsewhere, it is only with a Tiger on one's 'tail'.

At night, an eerie silence envelops the town. Jaffna com to life at the first hint of daybreak. Having looked down barrel of the gun all these years, its people have learnt the impossible art of survival. As soon as darkness descends the perils which haunt the streets of this electricity-starved to multiply. All work must be done while it is still light. tomorrow may be just too late.

The past year has been exceptionally difficult. The would are evident and ugly. The Sri Lankan Government's cut supplies and the army's renewed bombing have taken the toll: bus shelters have been wiped out, petrol pumps have be burnt down, and prices of commodities have spiralled out control. A bar of soap, for instance, costs Rs 65, eight in what one what one pays in Colombo. The people feel the pinch. schoolteacher T.N. Panjaksharam: "I do not angavastrams (shawls) any more and miss a lot of reading lack of money." But he makes do.

Like others, he has to. The fear of surveillance by the in

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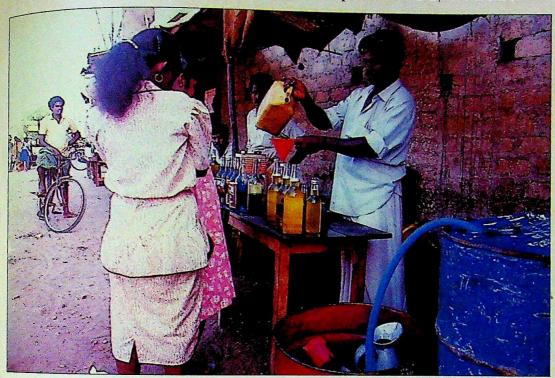
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Work on farms is scarce but people survive. Some are cycle-carriers while others sell kerosene at Rs 200 for every 750 ml and petrol for Rs 2,000 a litre.



DA NIGHTMARE

tadres leaves them with little choice. Those who speak out might end up like the 60-year-old man who has to sweep away this from demolition work at the 16th century Dutch-built Fort. Even those who have suffered at the hands of the lights choose their words carefully. Retired schoolteacher Balakrishna's second son, an EPRLF member, was killed by belitte. But he now says: "The Tigers have a greater concern

the Tamil-speaking areas han the rival groups. If the Government understands his, will not have to spend 86,000 instead of Rs 2,000 tery month."

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The Tigers' trail is unmis-Huge portraits of supremo V. Pirabhafondling a tiger cub the walls of cadre ofthe only three papers— In by the LTTE—allowed to Inclion in the area faithfully Voice of statements, the Tigers echoes his pecches, and the few tall buildings are fitted with loud-Peakers which resound with

the broadcasts. All the while, hype and hysteria are used to manipulate support for the Tamil cause. Even schoolchildren are not spared—the LTTE is a compulsory component of their syllabus. Groups of children come to Jaffina hospital to donate blood and girl guides sing the dirge at funerals.

In fact, deaths are turned into public spectacles. Pirabhakaran has ordered that all those killed in action after

> September 15 will be buried. Cremations have banned. Nobody knows why: it may be because of shortage of wood or because it affords a grander display. A 30minute ceremony accompanying the burial of two cadres at Eelankulam cemetery is one such marvel of mythmaking. The six-acre plot is lit with red and yellow lights. A contingent of armed Tigers enters, with more cadres bringing up the rear as pallbearers. The open coffins lie in wait for mourners to file past. One elderly woman looks in, discovers it is her

Pooneryn jetty: land of midnight crossings



OCTOBER 15, 1991 . INDIA TODAY 35





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IN the heart of Tiger terri-

tory at Kondavil in Jaffna, visi-

tors are a rare sight. Last fort-

night, Principal Correspondent

AMARNATH K. MENON spoke to

LTTE ideologue, Anton Balasin-

gham, in the bomb-ravaged

town. Also present was Yogara-

tnam Yogi, secretary of the

LTTE's political wing, who broke

into the conversation occasion-

ally to attack the Indian media.

Balasingham spoke at length on

the LTTE's role in Jaffna, but

skirted the issue of its involve-

ment in Rajiv's assassination

with remarkable finesse, argu-

ing they didn't even know "who

some characters described as

LITE men are". Excerpts:

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri money is sent in each and breaks down. But the silence of the occasion must money is sent in each and breaks down. not be broken: two women LTTE members try to quieten her. when their efforts fail, they drag her away.

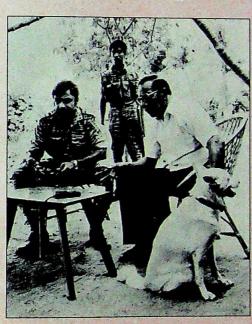
This is all part of the battle-readiness. In strategic villages like Velvettiturai—Pirabhakaran's hometown—and Point Pedro, most buildings have bunkers. Prices here are even higher than in Jaffina, which is why the salaries doled out to 30,000 people by the Sri Lanka Government are welcome. Central Government employees are paid in full while Provincial Government staff get truncated salaries. The

money is sent in cash on International Red Cross ships. The Tigers don't object to this largesse but have virtually banned collection of taxes. The Government has responded in kind by reducing the monthly flow of funds from Rs 15 crore to Rs 10 crore (in Sri Lankan currency). Sometimes, it sends only Rs 7 crore to prevent it from enriching LTTE coffers.

All government vehicles have been seized by the LTTE. So much so that even the senior Government agent in Jaffna is forced to cycle to work. "The only revenue for the Government is from the sale of postage stamps," says Relief Services'

ANTON BALASINGHAM

"Our image has been damaged"



Balasingham with Yogi: "We need arms"

Q. Have the post-Rajiv assassination developments in India caused a setback to the LTTE?

A. Why are our supporters being held in Tamil Nadu?

Q. You didn't answer my question.

A. Our image has been damaged. There are international repercussions. But we have sympathy among peo-

ple in Tamil Nadu due to the legitimacy of our cause and our cultural links. If Jayalalitha tries to cut those links, it will be counter-productive. Since we are a major politicomilitary force, India must revise her position.

Q. There are reports of your selling arms to Naxalites in India.

A. These stories are rubbish. We desperately need the arms. We are confronted with a big war here.

Q. From where do you get arms?

A. In ambushes. China is giving arms to Sri Lanka in order to contain India. Ultimately we get them.

Q. What are the LTTE's strengths and weaknesses? A. Wehave thrown the Sri Lankan Army out of Jaffina Fort, Mankulam and Kokkuvil. A few camps are left and We are trying to get rid of them. Vast areas are under our control, Politically, we are for negotiations. But Sri lanka has put stumbling blocks like asking for Pirabhakaran's presence at the talks. There is also an economic embargo on since June. People are suffering and the economy is crippled.

Q. Have you improved your fighting capability?

A. Yes. The Elephant Pass battle is a demonstration of our ability to fight a regular war. It took 10,000 Sri Lankan troops 24 days to advance 5 km with tactical naval and aerial support. We have introduced an anti-aircraft system and also use locally-produced mortars that can carry 1,000 kg of explosive over a mile.

Q. Do you have popular support?

A. More and more people are backing us. Coping with hardship is now part of their life. The economic embargo has made them feel that Colombo doesn't view them as Sri Lankan citizens, Food prices are high and unemployment is soaring. We are trying to develop a self-sustaining economy through cooperative farming and cottage industries.

Q. How do you choose your cadres?

A. There is a six-month

political and military training before commissioning. The cyanide pill they carry is a symbol of the willingness and courage to sacrifice one's life for a cause.

Q. How do you motivate recruits?

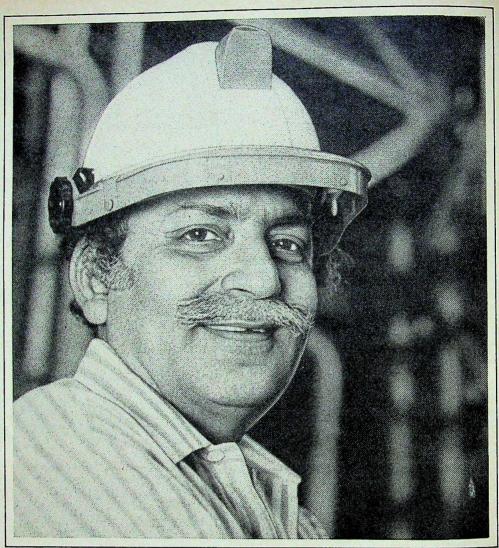
A. Our army commanders move forward and set an example, unlike generals in traditional armies. We are a small nation fighting a big enemy. We must have motivation. We are unique in our fighting ability.

O. What is the administration's role in LTTE-controlled areas?

A. We have not eliminated it. But we have our own system and collect our own taxes. The party looks after law and order in the absence of a court. If there is a major problem, appeals can be made to Pirabhakaran.

O. How about funds?

A. People who have money contribute. We also get money from Tamil expatriates. But, since banks don't allow over Rs 1,000 to be withdrawn at a time, we have a clandestine system to convert foreign currency.



Citizen Dunlop

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The problems are complex. Diverse. The problems of progress. But everything has a solution. It needs creativity. Innovation. Knowhow. And skills built over decades. The professionalism of Dunlop. Applying the ultimate scientific, technological and design expertise to transform basic raw materials into the finest finished products. To meet gigantic challenges set by core industries. Or the humble needs of a small artisan. With equal commitment and confidence. Research ing, developing, putting technology to work for Indian industry.

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DUNLOP Pledged to keep India ahead. Always ahead

Project Director C.L. Pathmanathan. Banks in Jaffina do not For those who remain the standard of the standard Project than Rs 1.000 a week because of the enforced lend liquidity crunch. But the Tigers are not worried. Their money comes in the form of foreign remittances. And there are enough locally-generated resources—the fee at the poneryn crossing, annual lorry permits, the palmyrah Iguor business, sale of cycle parts as well as revenue from three buses plying between Jaffina and Vavuniya.

Fentry is costly, so is an exit. As a young resident puts it: "Even the flight to freedom is not possible without the Tigers' permission." An application costs Rs 100. And if allowed to leave, the person has to give two gold sovereigns to the 'national defence fund'. If the entire family leaves, all papers relating to their property have to be surrendered to the LITE. Coconut groves and estates belonging to Tamil expatriates are already in their kitty. A woman who works in Colombo was the victim of one such land-grab. When her father died, she was asked to hand over the keys of the house by the LTTE and leave the peninsula.

For those who remain, there is little work on the farms. So, many have become cycle-carriers. Others sell kerosene at Rs 200 for a 750 ml-bottle and adulterated petrol for Rs 2,000 a litre. The Jaffna women have not been left behind in the paper chase. The LTTE has initiated several selfemployment schemes for them. As Adele Balasingham, wife of LTTE ideologue Anton claims: "The most significant development for the Jaffna woman in the past 10 years is her confidence." She denies that the cult of the gun is romanticised here but LTTE cadre Mullai's statement belies her claim. Wanting to fight for a homeland was not the only reason she joined the LTTE. "I like the gun too," Mullai says.

But there seem to be fewer takers for the LITE than before. Extortion and land-grab cannot, for long, be passed off as being necessitated by a state of war. Some are bold enough to say they want a replay of the "golden days" of the IPKF. Anything for them would be better than this long march to disaster. But it is unlikely that enough traction will be generated to drag their benighted province out of the mire of civil strife. Not immediately, anyway.

R. PREMADASA

The Other **Battle field**

Ranasinghe Premadasa is not yet out of the woods. The threat of impeachment-which can end his stay in the presidential office and also his political career-still hangs in balance. The Sri Lankan Parliament is set to go ahead with the impeachment motion, which was moved last month by the Opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and supported by dissident members of the ruling

United National Party (UNP) led by former ministers Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake. The charges include corruption, nepotism, and subversion of the Constitution.

Predictably, the President moved swiftly enough when the impeachment procedure started. He had the Service chiefs express their allegiance to the Constitution, asked the party MPs to meet the prime minister and declare their support to him, and suspended the Parliament session till September 24. Though he deferred the showdown, he failed to bury the crisis.

For, the President's opponents—slfp chief Sirimavo Bandaranaike and the UNP dissidents—are quite determined to pursue their goal of ousting Premadasa. Athulathmudali has accused the President of supplying arms to the LTTE, which given Premadasa's hawkish attitude is embarrassing. Pushed to the wall, he had to admit that the Lankan security forces fought with the LITE against the Tamil National Army in 1989.

Meanwhile, Premadasa is shrewdly exploring ways of Weakening the impeachment operation. He had Attorney-General Sunil de Silva express the constitu-



Gamini, Premadasa, and Athulathmudali: key players

tional opinion that the impeachment motion would lapse because the Speaker failed to mention it in the record book of the House. He also released letters written by Speaker M.H. Mohammed in 1989 favouring a greater role for Parliament, in order to establish partisanship of the presiding officer.

The attack on the President has added uncertainty to the volatile situation in the strife-ridden island. It has fuelled speculation that the on going land, naval and air attack on the LTTE strongholds in the north will be slowed down. Something the Tamil rebels would certainly want to happen. But so far the Defence Ministry has kept the heat of battle on the LTTE.

But the Opposition is determined to see Premadasa out of office. Says Bandaranaike: "When the campaign is over we will send the president's chair to the museum with the label that it was the throne used by King Premadasa." But Premadasa is a survivor. He may be in a beleaguered position, but he is not one to go under without a fight. -AMARNATH K. MENON

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BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY

Saffron Schizophrenia

The party has never seemed so divided between its need to carve out a wider support base and to retain its militant stronghold.

By INDERHT BADHWAR and ZAFAR AGHA

CHIZOPHRENIA within the BJP ranks has never been so acute. Its militant Hindu constituency still seems a safe bet but a wider constituency beckons. Should the party sacrifice the security of its grassroots support for the benefits of centrist appeal? The answer to that question may well force the BJP to re-examine its image.

And it might also belie the claims of party theoreticians that once the BJP gains a foothold on the centre-stage, its essentially liberal national leadership will edge out the more radical majority. The argument is that whenever the BJP is isolated from mainstream politics, it is garrotted by the stridency of its cadres.

But once it enters the national arena, the leaders take control and saner counsel prevails. The current scenario, however, seems to be devastating this theory. The BJP leaders talk softly, in the hope of broadening the party power base, but the clamour of the VHP and RSS threatens to drown them out. Unable to deal with their fundamentalist pulls, the вјр's image of a parochial party has been reinforced. And if the recently-passed Places of Worship Bill is any indication. the BIP is in danger of acquiring permanent residency status as the party every other group most likes to hate.

The bellicose behaviour of the party's new parliamentarians has done nothing to aid the BJP in carving out a new identity. The dismal performance of its governments in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh is no help either. Ridden with administrative ineptitude, dissidence, corruption, overcentralisation, and an inability to come to terms with the minorities, the governments have made nonsense of the party's vote-netting catchphrase-"You've tried others, now give us a chance." Familiarity has bred both co. tempt and discontent.

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Given these pressures, it doesn't seem long before its cadres will forcet BIP to clear the cobwebs from its rate vatra model of Hinduism. With the TR hanging tough on the Ram Janma bhoomi issue and flexing its biceps or the Mathura and Kashi temples, this winter promises to be steamy and strewn with communal conflagrations

The immediate spark has been the Lok Sabha approval to the religious places bill. While senior party leads L.K. Advani condemns it as "unwaranted and uncalled for", VHP Presiden Ashok Singhal sounds threatening "Withdraw the bill or face the cons quences," is his response to the Govern ment. vhp's governing council has a led upon the Hindu samaj to force the Government to withdraw the bill.

In fact, both the BJP

BJP leaders speak softly but the VHP and RSS clamour seems threatening.

and the VHP fully agree that the bill oust be opposed. What they are yet to music is the strategy. The BJP is bing its best to steer past the pitfalls launching new agitations for the rishna Janmabhoomi—in Mathura ndKashitemple, Says Advani: "The BJP has never spoken about any place of working other than Ayodhya. The VHP, ocourse, has been speaking about other places of worship.

The VHP, in fact, may try to generate mough smoke from the two simmering ontroversies to deflect attention from heprolonged Ram Janmabhoomi blaze. In the meantime, however, the VHP appears to have finalised November 19 athedate for construction, to take the wind out of its critics' sails-who in the brthcoming Lok Sabha by-elections, are bound to harp on the BJP's failure to fulfilits pledge on the Ram temple. But as itis only at the shilanyas site, which is away from the disputed shrine, this sems to be a mere ruse.

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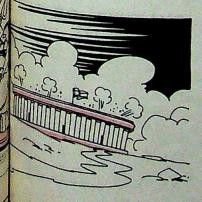
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CAUSE, despite the shrill theatrics of the BJP's pre-election propa-Diganda, and its own government in Uttar Pradesh, the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya is yet to come about. Advani says he would like the temple to be constructed without generating any acrimony or precipitating a confrontation. Echoes BJP General Sectelary Govindacharya: "History will bear witness to our interest in and commitment to the temple. But we have always talked of playing only a supporthe role in building the temple."

In fact, senior BJP leaders seem keen buse a weapon they didn't think much of earlier in resolving the Ayodhya langle; negotiation. Atal Behari Vaj-Payee, for instance, has tried to requisiton the services of a key member of the Muslim Personal Law Board, Maulana Milan. He met Ali Mian in Lucknow teently and asked him to convince luslims to untie the knotty issue.



Unruly Behaviour

EMPERS fly thick and fast in Parliament these days. Frequent free-for-alls, fisticuffs and physical abuse are the order of the day. And restraint seems to be the last thing on the minds of the elected representatives of the people. Largely responsible for this melee is the BJP, the very party that prided itself on the discipline of its cadres. If anything, its greatest proclaimed virtue has today

RSS and Bajrang Dal. Even senior BJP leaders are distancing themselves from their colleagues' antics. "We have on occasion been unable to curb the militancy of new members.' admits L.K. Advani. While Jaswant Singh, the soft-spoken, erudite MP from Jodhpur, says "they need time to adjust". Now, orientation courses



firebrand Uma Bharti, BJP MPs, especially the new entrants, have engaged in venomous attacks against rival parties. More disturbingly, they have been resorting to physical violence of an unprecedented nature in the House. Consider this:

▶ In early August, BJP members stormed the well of the House, demanding an apology from Tourism Minister Madhavrao Scindia for branding them "anti-national".

► The next day, party ranks attempted to storm Scindia's residence.

► The same month, nearly 15 BJP storm-troopers closed in on Janata Dal MP Syed Shahabuddin for saying "Swami bakwas ki baat kar raha hai". The reference was to the BJP's Swami Chinmayanand, who was then speaking on the Places of Worship Bill.

► And on September 9, BJP MPs sought to assault Janata Dal's R.S. Shastri for his remarks on Lord Ram.

This new, volatile face of the BJP has shocked veteran parliamentarians. Many attribute it to the fact that the 117-strong BJP contingent comprises a motley pack picked from the are being conducted for them.

The more rabid section of the BJP clearly disagrees. Some are for adopting an eye-for-an-eye policy. Others, like Guman Mal Lodha, associate restraint with insult. Uma Bharti agrees, saying she'd rather retaliate than observe parliamentary niceties. The BIP feels it has been singled out for attack. "One member jokes about Hanuman, another about Lord Ram. How'll they react if we talk about the Prophet similarly?" asks Lodha.

Clearly, religion is a major grouse. Says socialist leader Madhu Limaye: "Theironly pointisthe Ram temple. Poverty, illiteracy or events in the Soviet Union mean nothing.'

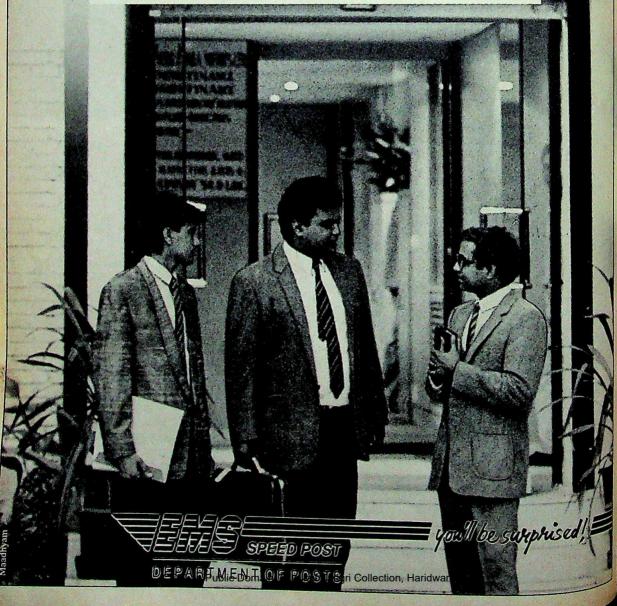
Ironically, despite the array of talent, the first session of the 10th Lok Sabha will be remembered not for Vajpayee's brilliant speech on the confidence motion nor for Jaswant Singh's incisive attack on the decision to defer the Punjab polls. The impression that lingers is of pandemonium; of the raucous cries of Jai Shri Ram raised by the rabid saffron brigade. -JAVED M. ANSARI

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ECIAL REPORT

But sweet-talking the prominent Justim leaders has not won over their beking as yet. So the BJP has increasbeen relying on the VHP to buy ind around the disputed shrine. The tar Pradesh Government is expected ptake over the Babri masjid with an dinance, backed by a statement from ane Muslim leaders that they will be adytorelocate the masjid to a Muslimsjority village called Makkha, 1.5 km om Ayodhya.

It is then that the BJP-VHP combine all work in concert to draw maximum mileage from its "fulfilled promise". When the Central Government and the est of the Opposition oppose the takeover bid, the two will launch a veritable

war of words to paint them as ess saffron—and therefore, atheir book, less patrioticthan them.

Singhal's recent remark



MADHYA PRADESH

PROBLEMS

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PATWA

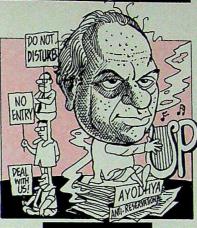
CONSEQUENCES

- Ministers and state party leaders are disenchanted with Patwa's inability to lead effectively
- Constitution of the ^{8uper cabinet'} headed by ^{/ij}aya Raje Scindia
- National party leaders like L.K. Advani openly chide Patwa for ineffectual governance
- After electoral debacle, no concrete steps taken to win over public
- ment in public, in assembly and keep mum on Congress(I) attacks

Partymenflay govern-

- Patwa weaker while ministerial decisions wait for Vijaya Raje's nod
- The chief minister's standing touches a new low and Government's credibility plummets
- The image of the Patwa Government continues to remain tainted

BJP GOVERNMENTS MOUNTING PROBLEMS



KALYAN SINGH

UTTAR PRADESH

PROBLEMS

CONSEQUENCES

- Ministers and lower level officials have little access to chief minister
- Bureaucrats favoured by Kalyan Singh call all the administrative shots
- Promulgation of a new ordinance on UPSC job reservations hanging fire
- Muslims feel insecure over Ayodhya revival

- Files not moving; ministers are disgruntled and partymen unhappy
- Arbitrary decisions are taken without the ministers' knowledge
- Resentful students, backward castes threaten new agitations
- Fears of new communal conflagrations persist

is a portent of this: "The country will have to decide whether the Muslim lobby will rule India or the Hindu sants' opinion will prevail." Singhal says that the religious places bill was pushed through because the Congress(I) had struck up an understanding with IUML leader G.M. Banatwala: the Congress(I) would initiate the bill if the Muslim League supported it in the assembly elections in Kerala.

Advani speaks in a similar vein: "The recent bill certainly gives an edge to the BJP campaign against pseudo-secularism." But this unintended advantage does not make him happy, he says, because it adds to disharmony. Perhaps it is this caution, born

of the nation's tenuous present and the fear of elections in the near future, which is asserting itself. As party Vice-President K.R. Malkani puts



BHAIRON S. **SHEKHAWAT**

RAJASTHAN

PROBLEMS

CONSEQUENCES

- Party and executive in Shekhawat's iron grip because most cabinet ministers are non-entities
 - Overcentralisation of administration and paperwork as crucial decision-making suffers
- An overworked chief minister, who is forced to look after micro-management in both the Government and the party
- Notime left for dealing corruption and crises like communal riots; no attention paid to rural area development
- Shekhawat's survival depends on Janata Dal(D) which had threatened to withdraw its support and blackmails him politically
- Administrative work suffers while the CM devotes his energy to political firefighting and cajoling his outside support

-N.K. SINGH and DILIP AWASTHI

it: "We are for stability in the country and would like to judge the Government on the basis of issues."

For now, therefore, even the VHP is content with a week-long public awareness campaign on the bill in early October. But soon, whether or not the Ram mantra wins any more votes for the BJP, the VHP will seek the aid of Lord Krishna too. Yatras are expected to be flagged off.

dharmacharyas will be sent forth, temples will become the epicentres of Hindu "reawakening" and rallies will be organised to whip up hysteria.

But this time, the party may not be able to get away with it. A broad realignment of political forces on the anti-communalism platform is not unlikely. The Congress(I) has already indicated that it may pull out all the stops in marginalis-

ing the BJP, if it chooses to press the Ra Janmabhoomi issue. Advani recognis the danger. Says he: "Even now a tempts are being made to launch vicious campaign against the BJP."

If other parties do unite, the prisolation will seem neither splendidn sensible. In what should have been best year ever, the BJP is hardly have the time of its life.

NAWABGANJ MUSLIMS

Running Scared

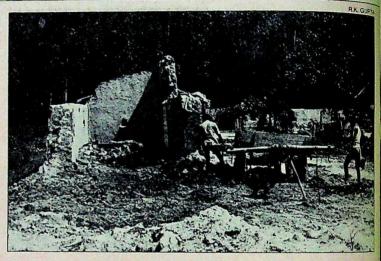
OMMUNAL hysteria has reached a fever pitch in Bareilly's Nawabganj tehsil. With the BJP Government waving the Hindutva banner unabashedly, Muslims are scurrying for cover. Tellingly, the Muslim exodus from the dozen Hindudominated villages began soon after the BJP came to power in June.

And they haven't stopped running since. The migration was triggered off by the killing of a Muslim, Ali Ahmed of Dandia Faizulla village, on June 15—the day of the Nawabganj assembly constituency poll. Muslims hold BJP candidate Bhagwat Sharan responsible for the violence.

The poll was countermanded but the communal fires had been stoked. At least 150 Muslim families have already migrated to Sainthal and Tanda Sadat villages. Officials confirm the migration of 91 families. Of these, they claim, 38 have returned.

The real conflict is between the Muslims and the Gangwars (Kurmi-OBC)—the agricultural workers and the landlords. Moreover, the Gangwars have the BJP behind them—six of the nine BJP candidates from Bareilly are Gangwars.

Not surprisingly, the Muslims complain of victimisation. They claim the administration doesn't respond to their FIRs. District Magistrate D.D. Verma denies this: "I have myself visited these areas more than twice. We have ensured that complaints from Muslims are dealt with immedia-



Razed house: facing the wrath of Hindutva

The Muslims hold the BJP responsible for their migration.

tely." According to Aziz Quereshi, 34, a journalist in Tanda village—the new home for many Muslims—seven Muslims have been murdered by Kurmis since the BJP came to power. And the police has done little about it. The district magistrate says there have been just four murders, that too stemming from personal enmity, not political vendetta.

The Kurmis are quick to defend themselves. They put the blame on Akbar Ahmed "Dumpy", the Congress(I) candidate for the Bareilly Lok Sabha seat. They say Ahmed engineered the communal divide to corner the Muslim vote. Says Mukta Prasad Gangwar of Lamba Khera village, from where 15 Muslim families have migrated: "There was Hindu-Muslim harmony before Akbar Ahmed came on the scene. After all, we've elected Muslims like Abida Ahmed."

The Muslims who have stayed behind live in fear. Even Ramzani. 45. the only Muslim left in Lamba Khera, sounded transparently false, when he said: "Nothing unloward was done to the Muslims who migrated."

The ravaged houses reveal the truth. Says Abdul Raul. 40, who now lives in Sainthal village. "We were beaten up, our women abused and ourhouses demolished." Others like Dr Qamarur Rehman are determined never to return.

Meanwhile, the flight of the Muslims continues. Says District Magistrate Verma: "We are not forcing anybody to go back until we can restore their confidence." As of now that hasn't happened. In fact, ever since the murder of Abdul Karim at the irrigation dam near Grem village. Mulsims have even stopped travelling on the dam road at night.

That's not surprising. For, painted on a wall near the dam is a threatening message: Yahan 8 baje ke bad aanaa manaa hai, varna maut pichchi karegi. (Don't come here after 8 p.m. of else death with follow you.)

—DILIP AWASTHI in Nawabhas

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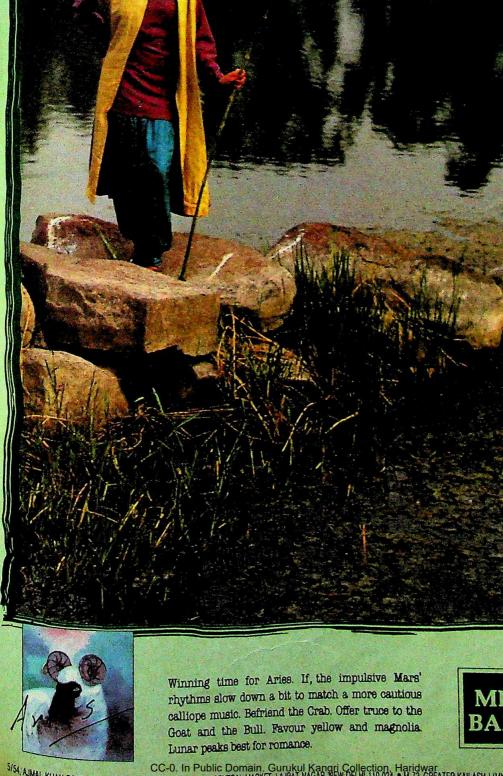
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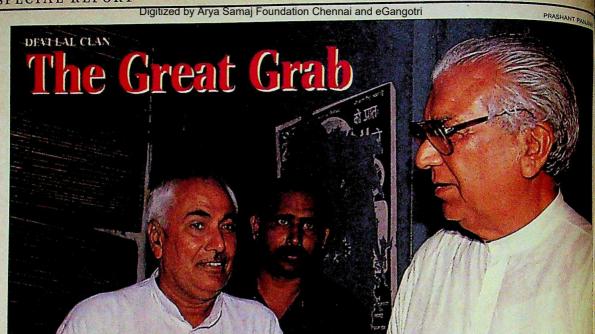




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**Collection Haridwar Collection Haridwa



By HARINDER BAWEIA

THE patriarch no longer sits on a pedestal. Not even on his home turf. Four years of Devi Lal and family in power have left Haryana and its people scarred and scared.

In particular, Devi Lal's home district, Sirsa, remembers him and his son, Om Prakash Chautala, only with anger and contempt. After riding to power on the backs of the farmers, the onceinvincible Tau and his aging enfant, terrible, stole their land from right under their noses. And this was done systematically by Chautala's sons, Ajay Singh and Abhay Singh, who drove around the villages in jeeps, ordering their men to haul crop that farmers had just harvested. Those who dared to speak out had their water supply cut off. Or had to suffer at the hands of the police.

Devi Lal's ancestral village, Chautala, bears mute testimony to the years of the Tau-Chautala raj. Most of the families who fled to Ganganagar district in Rajasthan are now returning to find their homes destroyed. One of them, Hari Ram, who ran away four years ago because Abhay Singh wanted him to transfer his land to the Chautalas, has come back to find his farmhouse in a

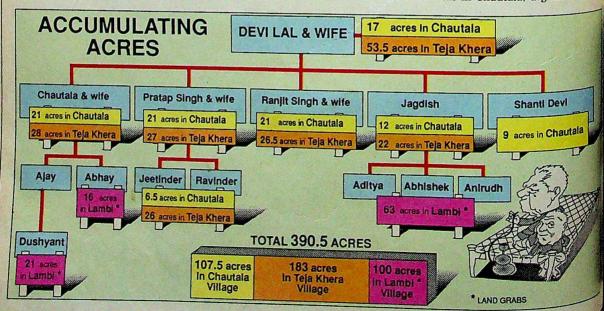
Chautala, Devi Lal: feeling the heat

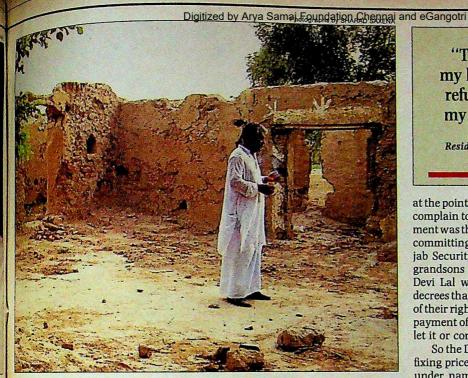
shambles. Another-Om Prakashstayed away all this while because, ash says: "I couldn't risk being summoned to the thana again, hung upside down from the ceiling fan and be beaten.

But though the Chautalas are is from the seat of power, fear still hang heavily over the village. Devi Lal's or chards touch many of their fields and Abhay Singh still roams around with armed supporters. Not satisfied with owning 290 acres of prime land it Chautala and Teja Khera villages, two havelis in Chautala, a grain shop and

Devi Lal more. An how the a While the many vio tions hav examples FORCIB

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house each in Sirsa and Dabwali, the Devi Lal family is on the look-out for more. And there are several instances of how the acres have been accumulated. While the state is rife with talk of the many violations, INDIA TODAY investigations have thrown up a few glaring examples of blatant land-grabs.

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along with 15 other tenants of Lambi village, 45 km from Chautala, cultivated the 137-acre plot owned by Pokhar Dass, a Sonepat resident. In 1950, Dass

had given them cultivable possession of the land in return for a third of the total harvest. But that was only till 1989 when Ajay and Abhay came to their village and announced they were the new owners, having bought the land from Dass' son Riju Ram. The tenants, they said, would have to give up possession. Says Rati Ram, who is left with only 12 acres of his 35-acre plot: "Unke same hum kya kar sakte hain. Humne to bandook ki nok pe kiya. Complaint bhi karte to kis ko, sarkar to unki hi thi." (What could we do? We were forced to give up

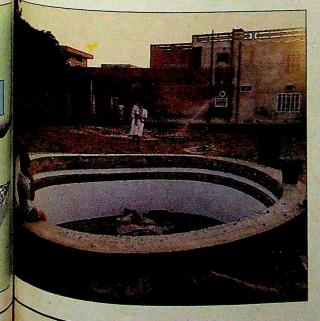
"They destroyed my house because I refused to transfer my land to them."

HARI RAM Resident of Chautala village

at the point of a gun. And who could we complain to. After all, even the Government was theirs.) If they knew they were committing an offence under the Punjab Security of Land Tenures Act, the grandsons of the then chief minister Devi Lal were not bothered. The Act decrees that tenants can be dispossessed of their rights only if there is a default in payment of rent or if tenants either sublet it or construct on it.

So the Devi Lal family now owns, by fixing prices and registering land deeds under names of various family members, 100 acres of this prime property in Lambi, where they are constructing a farmhouse. This too violates the Land Tenures Act, because though ownership of land can change hands, new owners cannot build on it. In order to hush the tenants, the Chautalas returned possession of 37 acres of the 137-acre plot, paying Rs 2.78 lakh for it. Of the plot, 21 acres are registered in the name of Chautala's four-year-old grandson Dushyant Kumar. Now worth Rs 15.54 lakh, the land was bought for a mere Rs 1.61 lakh, flouting guidelines

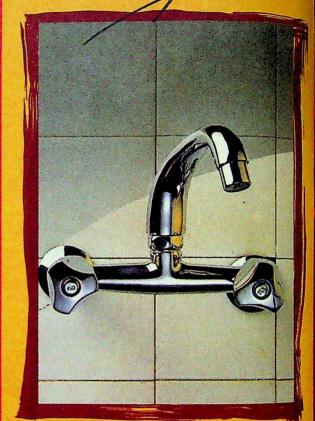
The Teja Khera swimming pool for children and the illegal farmhouse in Lambi: rural riches





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Devi Kum onminimum value of land set by the district's deputy commissioner (DC).

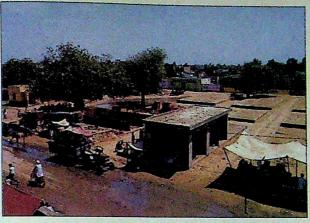
Devi Lal's other grandsons—Aditya, Abhishek
and Anirudh—too will
not have a penurious future. As many as
63 acres of the Lambi
plot have been bought
for Rs 4.72 lakh, while the
oc's evaluation puts it at
Rs 22 lakh. The remaining
16 acres belong to Abhay.
Bought for Rs 1.56 lakh,
it is actually worth
Rs 5.58 lakh.

But Chautala denies that his family has any land in Lambi. Says he: "Our farmhouse is in Teja Khera. What land are you talking about?"

BLATANT ILLEGALITY:

The Chautala clan's monicker, "zameen ke dushman", is well-earned. About 40 km from Sirsa, in the heart of Ellanabad-the area was once part of a government dispensary—there lie 125 incomplete shops, all owned by the Tau clan. The shops would have been sold for about Rs 2 lakh each if it weren't for a court stay on the construction. The case is as follows: the Ellanabad block samiti filed a suit in the magistrate's office, claiming that the land belonged to them and not the Health Department. But the department officials did not turn up for the hearings, which resulted in an ex parte judgement in the block samiti's favour. Which is when the family of D.D. Golsha—the local businessman who had donated the land to the gram panchayat in 1920—filed a case in the civil court claiming the land was theirs.

And even more strangely, the samiti this time round failed to be represented in court, leading to another exparte order. The land reverted to the Golsha family, which promptly sold it to Devi Lal and company. It is now registered in the names of Vijay Khor, brother-in-law of Devi Lal's daughter; Sandeep Kumar, grandson of Devi



Pending Cases

Supriya Case: Chautala's daughter-in-law and Abhay Singh's wife, Supriya, died of gunshot wounds on November 11, 1988. Devi Lal claimed she shot herself accidentally while unpacking her suitcase. Bhajan Lal screamed murder. Some of the questions the CBI will now ask are: Was the firearm a pistol or a revolver? Supriya's father claimed it

was a revolver whereas Abhay's brother, Ajay, saidit was a pistol. Then, what was Supriya packing? Her father says it was clothes for her husband. Abhay says he saw salwar-kameezes. Also, who did the weapon belong to? While Ajay says it belonged to Devi Lal, Ranjit Singh—Devi Lal's youngest son—claims it was Ajay's.



Meham Violence: The

CBI is probing the rigging and violence after which the by-election, being contested by Chautala, was countermanded in March last year.



Lambi Shoot-out: An FIR was filed on August 1 this year, at the Sadar Dabwali police station by Gurjit Singh, charging Chautala's son Ajay Singh with attempted murder. According to Gurjit, he and two others were waylaid by Ajay near their Lambi farmhouse and thrashed. Gurjit complains that Ajay had diverted the water course to stop supply of water to adja-

cent farms. According to the FIR, the three were fired at without provocation. Ajay has taken anticipatory bail but he is going to be in serious trouble, for he too has filed a complaint with the police, in which, curiously, he admits to having locked up the three men.

Disputed shopping complex at Ellanabad

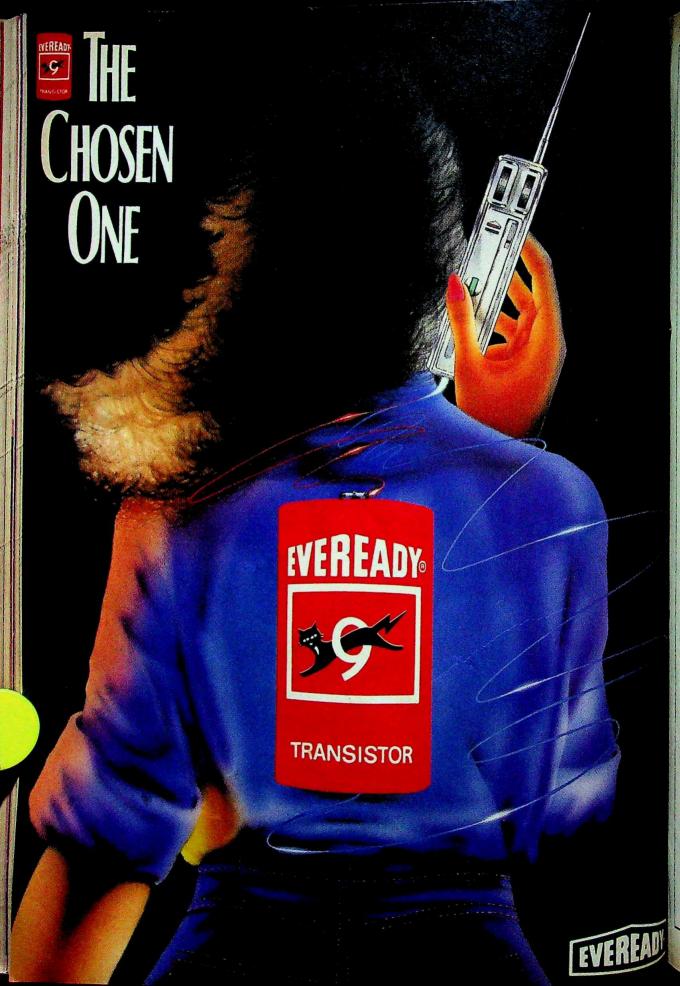
Lal's sister; and Sanjaypal Singh, son of Chautala's close friend, Jaswant Singh. The registration was done for Rs 2.5 lakh—a mere Rs 80 per square yard, whereas it is, according to the pc's evaluation, worth Rs 2,500 per square yard. The family thus got away with paying only Rs 2.5 lakh for land worth Rs 75 lakh. Vilay Khor has now been

charged with evasion of stamp duty by the Bhajan Lal administration under Section 47A of the Indian Stamp Act, 1989. Chautala dismisses the charges: "My relatives are rich landlords. We don't need to twist the law."

PERKS OF POWER: When in power, Devi Lal spoke loud and long about the need for spending curbs. But consider this. Chautala's farmhouse in Teja Khera, 90 km from Sirsa, has a tiled swimming pool for children. Like the fisheries pond, it lies incomplete, its construction overtaken by President's rule in Haryana.

The family does, however, have a completed link canal providing water to the farm. Soon after Devi Lal was sworn in as chief minister in June 1987, the state's Irrigation Department was steam-rolled into service for its construction. With a capacity of 25 cusecs, it is believed to have cost the Irrigation Department Rs 12.5 lakh.

Once acclaimed as the messiah of the masses. Devi Lal now stands alone, a victim of his family's profligacy. Chautala, finding Chief Minister Bhajan Lal's grip closing in on him, has taken off for the cooler climes of Europe. His infamous sons are in Chautala village but are keeping a low profile. For Bhajan Lal is hot on their trail. Says he: "Chautala and his sons behaved as if they were property dealers." For Devi Lal's scions nemesis seems to be at hand.



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K. KARUNAKARAN

Southern Superstar

Having secured his southern foothold, the fourth-term chief minister of Kerala is now exercising increasing influence at the Centre.

By ANAND VISWANATHAN

Ttook him a long time. But now that his star is finally glittering on the Inational firmament, Kerala Chief Minister K. Karunakaran is going allout to ensure it retains its brilliance.

At an age when most politicians think of ways to supplement a legislator's pension, the 73-year-old little big man from down south is not only chief minister for the fourth time but also member of the Congress(I) Parliamentary Board. More than that, he isemerging as a powerful party pundit, whose yeas and nays count. In fact, he has shown that he can run with the

hares and hunt with the hounds. From being Indira Gandhi's confidant and Rajiv Gandhi's firm supporter to being an initial Pawar enthusiast and now Narasimha Rao's fire-fighter. Karunakaran has swayed, albeit gracefully, with the prevailing wind.

And in recent weeks he has been demonstrating this ability to good effect, establishing himself as the new superstar of the south. For instance, at a time when the controversy over Madhavrao Scindia's remarks on the BJP was assuming threatening proportions, Karunakaran flew down to Delhi and advised Narasimha Rao to stand firm under pressure. Scindia, too, took heart from the freely-tendered tip, and reiterated his stance. As a party senior in Kerala puts it: "Karunakaran was, as always, playing for the future." If Scindia becomes prime minister, Karunakaran has made sure he'll still be in the ball game.

Working his way up from being a petty union worker, Karunakaran has become the invincible strongman whose troubleshooting skills are being used to put out party blazes. So, last month he was busy engineering a temporary truce in Karnataka, where a host of Congress(I) MLAs and MPs wanted Chief Minister S. Bangarappa's ouster. Now the Andhra Pradesh dissi-

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Back as chief minister, thanks to sympathy vote and BJP's covert backing.

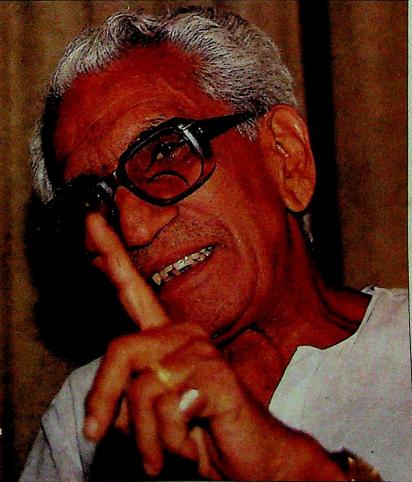
Switches support from Pawar to Narasimha Rao in the leadership struggle, takes along many southern MPs.

Secures four berths ^{for} Kerala MPs in Union council of ministers.

is deputed to handle mutiny ^{against} Bangarappa in Karnataka; effects cease-fire.

Dissidents in Andhra Pradesh, led by Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, approach him.

Speaks up for oneman, one-post principle in party and need for ^{organisational} elections.





dents seem to need his services. Says principal rebel Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy: "We have approached him. He is probably one of the few Congress(I) leaders who understand things."

He has also been in the thick of the Cauvery controversy. His government put on record its support to Karnataka's stand last fortnight, while safeguarding Kerala's claim to the river water. Karunakaran, in fact, has always fought for his state-especially when it comes to establishing his governance there. In the recent assembly elections-his eighth-he didn't even stop short of a deal with the BIP.

But Karunakaran has never challenged the writ of the party high command. He is matched in this self-effacing skill only by former party general secretary G.K. Moopanar. But unlike Karunakaran with party bosses

Moopanar, he is not a behind-thescenes manipulator. When he bangs his iron fist, order is restored. Some of this is, of course, the respect due to him for his longevity-he has been a freedom fighter. As Karnataka Congress(I) leader M. Veerappa Moily says: "His age and maturity command respect."

LSO, in spite of being challenged by dissidence in the state, Karunakaran has never looked in danger of being cut to size. Whenever his rivals have staked their claim and been favoured by the Congress(I) high command, as was done to warn him during his brief flirtation with the Pawar-camp, Karunakaran has deftly switched sides and won over his new master.

But Karunakaran may no longer be content to remain confined to the southern backwaters. He recently spoke up for the one-man, one-post principle. And by promising to raise the issue of organisational elections at the next AICC(I) session, he sent a cautionary message to Narasimha Rao. It was also, possibly, the prelude to throwing his own hat in the ring for the party president's job.

The best measure of his growing stature is perhaps the deluge of work which has swamped the 100-strong staff of the chief minister's secretariat As a top aide quips: "Of late, there have been more calls from Delhi than from here." The elder statesman label has stuck. And Karunakaran is not complaining. -with KAVEREE BAMZAI

SITTING in his newly-furnished office at the Trivandrum secretariat, dressed in a crumpled dhoti-kurta.

Kerala Chief Minister K. Karunakaran was the picture of confidence as he spoke Senior Correspondent ANAND VISWANATHAN. Excerpts:

Q. What are the reasons for your emergence as a regional boss?

A. I don't think I am one. Anyway, I am a firm believer in the Congress(I), have been faithful, have no personal ambitions and have never lost contact with the masses.

Q. Why didn't you attain your present position during Rajiv's time?

A. His was a towering personality. He had charisma. The contributions of others went unnoticed.

INTERVIEW

"I chose Rao over Pawar"

Q. You were closer to Sharad Pawar than to P.V. Narasimha Rao. So why did you decide to back Narasimha Rao at the last moment?

A. My personal association with people has never influenced my political stand. My only interest was whoever I backed should do good to the party. Between Pawar and Narasimha Rao, I chose to support Narasimha Rao because he had a good background, was experienced and was more trusted by Indiraji and Rajivji. And he has a clean image.

Q. Did the coterie blackmail you by threatening to make A.K. Antony chief minister?

A. That's baseless. I am here on

my own might. There has never been a directive from New Delhi on my appointment as chief minister. Neither

have I thrust myself upon the party in Kerala. I was ambitious, but only when I was young. Now, I am least bothered about quitting.

Q. How about the Cauvery issue? A. A problem such as this should not be dragged to the court or made a political issue. States should share water. Even so, Kerala will not give up its legitimate claim to placate either Tamil Nadu or Karnataka.

Q. Why did you support Madhavrao Scindia on the traitors issue? Because you saw him as a prospective prime minister?

A. Not at all. The prime minister requested my opinion when I was in Delhi. That's all.

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A 91005

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A 91006

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PANDIT JASRAJ (Vocal)

Bairagi Bhairay/Darbari Kanhra A 91011

ZAHIRUDDIN & WASIFUDDIN

DAGAR (Dhrupad) Lalit/Kambojhi

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KARNATIC VOCAL

C 91015

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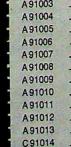
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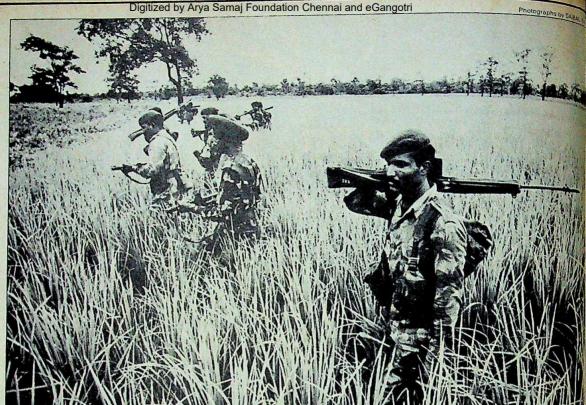
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ASSAM

A Critical Crackdown

On the success of Operation Rhino depends the well-being of both Saikia and the state. So far the signals are ambiguous.

By FARZAND AHMED in Guwahati

UMOURS about an army crackdown against the outlawed ULFA militant organisation in Assam had been circulating in government circles in Guwahati for days. Despite that, Operation Rhino, launched in the early hours of September 15 from deep within the dense jungles on the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border, was sudden and swift. And, on its outcome hinged the political future of the man who ordered it: Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia, the same man who for the past two-and-a-half months had been trying to negotiate a deal with the militants. Says Saikia: "There was no alternative.

ULFA will now have to surrender."

It is a tall order, but the army is pulling out all the stops. It homed in on the sparsely-populated Namsai reserve forest in Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh, where ULFA had set up a chain of camps. Swooping in from all directions, troops from the Mountain Division and 13th Punjab Regiment-based at Teju in Arunachal Pradesh-rolled in and cordoned off the area.

The marshy land made movement difficult. So, under cover of darkness, three army columns were dropped by air. Armed commandos, along with jeeps and trucks, came together to block all exits and as the first rays of the sun pierced the sky, Operation Cloudburst

Armymen comb fields for ULFA militants: tough task

broke. ULFA camps, set up after are operations were suspended on April! this year, were systematically localed and dismantled.

There were three small bases with series of huts ringing Jona village at one bigger base at Kopatali Chapri. B the only notable spoils of victory wo some documents which revealed names of militants. The army was a disheartened. As an officer at the di sion headquarters at Dinjan ne Dibrugarh put it: "We forced ITEA return to the home base where it will possible to zero in on them.'

By shifting ULFA cadres from an are ideally suited to their needs—because its largely sympathetic Assamese pop lation as well as its inaccessibilityarmy at least got the enemy back int state. Operation Cloudburst was over six hours, but by that time its larger more fearsome sequel, Operation Rhin had begun.

About time, too, felt some sen officers. Brigadier General Staff Srivastava, for instance, is still so about what he calls the prematures pension of Operation Bajrang, Says Another two months would brought the organisation to its kno But then we lost out." And

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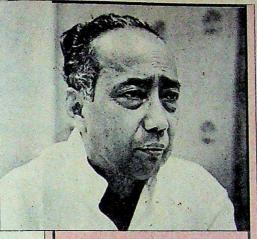
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regrouped its forces. But while Saikia was trying to woo the militants with reason, the army engines were not idling. The chinks in the Operation Bajrang armour were beingidentified and covered. As General Officer-in-Commanding Ajay Singh sums it up: "We were wiser this time." They needed to be. According to The Sentinel Editor D.N. Bezbaruah, during Operation Bajrang, the soldiers behaved as if theirs was an occupation army. But

now clearly, the army public relations unit is in overdrive. Since soldiers had problems in conversing with villagers. they were subjected to crash courses in etiquette and Assamese. Says a young captain: "Now, whenever we raid a village, we take care not to hurt the feelings of the people." Yet redeployment of the army has been malarger scale than in Operation

Bajrang. With elements of four army divisions beefed up by 270 paramilitary companies, the whole of Assam has effectively been put under surveillance.

But if wresting control of the state's territory will be tough, winning over the hearts and minds of a frightened people will not be any easier. The army claims that the militants by their misdeeds have alienated the people. Claims Ajay Singh:



"I am prepared to lose the hostages. After all, the integrity of the country and state is involved.'

> HITESWAR SAIKIA Chief Minister

"The operation has come as a relief to the people." But the people's high anxiety can be discerned in their hushed whispers. Says a young Tinsukia businessman: "We don't dare speak out against ULFA. The army comes and goes. but these boys will stay on."

To buttress his observation, he points out that the militants re-started extortions once Operation Bajrang was withdrawn. There is no guarantee they will not do so again. He asks: "Who will protect us then?" With some people, support for ULFA and anger against being treated as a "colony" of the Centre isevident. Says Jiban Karmakar, a jeweller from the outskirts of Sibsagar: "ULFA has bases in villages. How can the army fight against society?"

The army, however, claims it is getting full support from the people. Its results so far tell a different story. Although there has been no overt expression of any resentment, the army intelligence has located only 12 camps and 250-odd sympathisers and activists. More glaringly, ULFA has been able to hang on to six hostages, for far too long.

Last fortnight, the security forces' attempt to rescue oncc Superintending Engineer, B.P. Srivastava, only culminated in his death, ULFA 'deputy commander-in-chief, Naren Deka, accused the security forces of gunning down Srivastava. But the official account read differently: Srivastava was shifted to a house in Sensuapukhuri village in Dibrugarh district, which paramilitary forces raided on a tip-off. It was then that the 'encounter' took place.

In fact, in the drama over the deployment, the fate of the hostages has been all but forgotten. IAS officer S.K. Tiwary wrote a poignant letter to state Chief Secretary H.N. Das, asking for his release. But not many in the Government have been willing to lend an ear either to him or to the Superintendent in Assam's Supply Directorate, Rajni Das. Saikia

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ARMY OPERATIONS AGAINST ULFA, 1990-91

OPERATION BAJRANG:

Launched on November 27 last year, the day President's rule is imposed. Fifteen activists are killed,

2.800 suspected militants arrested. 1,208 weapons and Rs 5 crore seized. ULFA retaliates, killing 58, but declares a ceasefire on March 1, 1991, apologises for its mistakes, and allows polls to be held peacefully. The operation is withdrawn on April 20.

OPERATION BLUEPRINT

Hiteswar Saikia takes over on June 30. grants general amnesty to ulfa delainees. ULFA regroups and strikes again, kidnapping 14 officials. The army is told to stand by. It starts surveillance under Operation Blueprint: revives its sources, works out a plan to strike swiftly and keeps a watch on new camps being set up in Arunachal Pradesh.

OPERATION CLOUDBURST

A surgical exercise launched on September 15-the day Operation Rhino is ordered—demolishes three ULFA bases discovered near Jona village and another at Kopatali Chapri in Arunachal Pradesh.

According to the commander, Brigadier H. Bhaskar. troops first seal all land and river routes. Then, commandos of the Quick Reaction Team are air-dropped on the forest bases. Documents with names of top leaders as also explosives and firearms are seized from Kopatali Chapri base, which is being used to recruit cadres. Six persons are arrested. Locals say top ULFA leader Paresh Barua had visited the camp only two weeks ago.

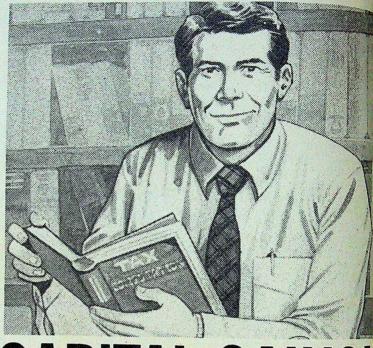
OPERATION RHINO

Launched across the state and along its borders, the aim of the muchpublicised strike: to force ULFA to the negotiating table. Four divisions are pressed into action, backed by 270 companies of paramilitary forces. By the end of the first week, 258 activists and sympathisers are held and 12 camps are raided.

Authorities claim that the army and civil administration are working in unison and local support is being enlisted. The top leaders remain elusive. But the army is determined to push home its advantage.

-FARZAND AHMED

"I studied all the schemes. And I chose this one".



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1990-91	10.25%			



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maintains he will not succumb. A handful of boys, he asserts, will not be allowed to dictate terms to a popular government. His decision is coldblooded but calculated: "I am prepared to lose the hostages. After all, the integrity of the country and two crore people

of the state is involved." But he

appears to be vacillating.

one

AIKIA has only himself to blame for the current impasse. He managed to wedge himself between two immovable rocks all on his own. Despite a clear mandate, he first behaved with extreme circumspection in tackling the militants: conceding their demands, trying to talk them out of their jungle fatigues, and waiting for a consensus on every issue. But now he has swung to the other extreme. Predictably, the people are on edge. Union Home Minister

S.B. Chavan's statement that there would be no negotiations with ULFA till the army finished its work in Assam is for its denizens one more ominous warning of the hard days ahead.



If Saikia and Ajay Singh believe the army operation will bring the militants crawling to the negotiating table, the state's opposition parties don't share the view. Both the AGP and the Natun

Civilians being frisked

AGP vehemently criticised the move to bring in the army. The chain of events leading to the launching of Operation Rhino does seem a little amiss. A few days before the operation was launched, Assembly Speaker Jibakanta Gogoi convened an all-party meeting on the hostages' issue. An appeal was issued to ULFA to release the hostages and to the Government to free all TADA detainees. In response, ulfa sent a letter to H.N. Das, which said the Government would be responsible for the killing of all hostages. The same night, Operation Rhino was set in motion.

Ironically, those who would benefit most from the, army presence do not seem reassured by it. Last fortnight, over 40 ongc officials left the state while the rest were ready to follow. As for the man who

could have turned the tide and steered the state into safer realms, the crackdown is one final attempt to keep Assam from sinking into another bout of insurgency.

ULFA

Aid Abroad

T was just the kind of weapon Hiteswar Saikia was looking for in his fight with the ULFA. On September 9, Saikia said in the state Assembly that ULFA had established links with China, Bangladesh and Pakistan. And that ULFA 'commander-in-chief' Paresh Barua had set up training camps in China while in April, its chairman Aurobindo Rajkhowa, had visited Bangladesh with other leaders, to lay the groundwork for camps there.

Saikia's disclosure was sparked off by the arrest of ULFA 'operational commander' Manoj Hazarika and National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-Khaplang group) liaison man Bhaskar Barua on August 22. Saikia's charges were substantiated by the recovery of a diary—reportedly Rajkhowa's—from Jorhat earlier. The entries in Rajkhowa's 'diary' revealed that he had visited Bangladesh in order to create a



(Second from left) ULFA chief Rajkhowa with other activists in Dhaka

sanctuary there for the ULFA, make arrangements for a trip to China, study Pakistan's pattern of assistance and garner support in the UK.

Andrew Giri, a Khasi conduit between NSCN and ULFA, had confessed as much to the police. Photographs showing Rajkhowa in Dhaka did the rest of the damage though ULFA's 'deputy commander-in-chief' Naren Deka denied Saikia's charges.

But the discovery of foreign links should be no surprise for an organisation which was born in Myanmar's Kachin valley and bred, under NSCN's watchful eye, on India's fertile soil.

-FARZAND AHMED

ation

CONGRESS(I)

Sitting Pretty

The Narasimha Rao Government has successfully weathered a stormy parliamentary session, and is growing out of its minority syndrome.

By ZAFAR AGHA

ELPED by a combination of factors, the Congress(I) has been leading a charmed life. The minority government has survived a potentially disastrous Parliament session, mainly because the BIP is riven with confusion on its future plans and plank, while the Opposition is loath to contest another election. Moreover, the parties. sensing a coming centrist re-alignment with the Congress(I) at its hub, are reluctant to cross swords with it.

But the Congress(1) is not pushing its luck too far. It has set into motion its ace wheeler-dealers to ensure it gets rid of its minority government syndrome. An informal group of ministers-Sharad Pawar, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Rajesh Pilot,



100 DAYS OF THE NARASIMHA RAO GOVERNMENT

TIME-BOUND MANIFESTO PROMISES

POLITICAL

- Re-introduce bills on devolving power to local bodies
- Not done
- Set up a composite force to quell communal riots
- Reiterated without action
- Ensure status quo of places of worship as on August 15, 1947
- Bill passed
- Establish a backward classes development corporation
- Done

PRICES

Push prices to 1990 levels for:

Prices up

- Diesel, kerosene, salt
- Not rolled back
- Edible oil
- Cycles
- Prices maintained
- Two-wheelers
- Lowered for 50-70 cc
- Cotton sarees and dhotis
- Not rolled back

Economic promises

- Keep direct taxes constant
- Personal income tax untouched; corporate taxes hiked
- Stabilise customs, excise
- Customs stable, excise duties increased
- Not taxing profits if re-invested in: low and middle income group houses; alternative energy; school buildings; drinking water supply
- Proposed in the budget

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

KASHMIR: No fresh initiative; PUNJAB: Confusion, with postponement of elections to February 15, 1992; ASSAM: Flip-flop between conciliation and crackdown on ULFA; COMMUNAL SITUATION: No major riots.

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Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, Sita-Rangarania and V.C. Shukla—is testing of the Opposition's vulnerable spots. It 18 Well-honed strategy in which Prime inister Narasimha Rao maintains a icadeofrectitude, declaring: "Wedon't ant to break any party.

But developments in the Samajwadi

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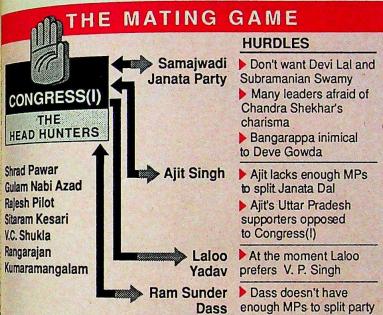
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Janata Party (SJP) and the Janata Dal virtually invite Congress(I) intervention. At a three-day conclave, spleaders Chandra Shekhar, H.D. Deve Gowda, Yashwant Sinha, Digvijay Singh-absentees were Devi Lal, Kamal Morarka. Subramanian Swamy, S.P. Malaviyaconsidered merger with the Congress(I).

Charl by PRABAL MANDAL



But the ruling party is reluctant to accept Devi Lal and Swamy whose careers have revolved around opposition to the Congress(I). Besides, as a minister engaged in the talks said: "Devi Lal will not be acceptable to Bhajan Lal." The other stumbling block is Chandra Shekhar who is viewed with suspicion, especially by Congress(I) leaders from the Hindi belt like Arjun Singh, Madhavrao Scindia and Pawar. They fear Shekhar may become a contender for the top slot. . Karnataka Chief Minister S. Bangarappa also has misgivings about Deve Gowda who like him belongs to a backward caste. The Congress(I) is thus working on a strategy, leaving out Shekhar and Deve Gowda and inducting the other three SIP Lok Sabha MPs.

But the Congress(I) needs 22 MPs to shed minority status. Its prime quarry is Ajit Singh, who has been slugging it out with V.P. Singh. Ajit is believed to be keen to join hands with the Congress(I), but may fail to muster the 19 MPs needed to split the party.

To make it 19, the Congress(I) is scouring Bihar. Efforts to woo Laloo Prasad Yadav came a cropper. Then, state Janata Dal chief Ram Sunder Das, a Yadav rival, and other MPs were approached. But so far to no avail.

While his ministers head-hunt

ECONOMY

- Started with a flourish, announcing trade reforms and the new industrial policy. But kept mum on exit policy for industries. MRTP Act not yet scrapped.
- No real progress in curbing government spending themain culprit of the financial mess.
- Forex situation remains grim and debt is expected to increase. Devaluation has ^{fuelled} inflation, which could undo the reforms.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- With the invisible Solanki in charge and Narasimha Rao entangled in domestic problems, foreign policy got short shrift even as the world changed at a blinding pace.
- Knee-jerk reaction to the aborted Moscow coup drew flak. No diplomatic initiative with neighbours.
- Only noticeable differences: more warmth vis-avis the US and upgrading of economic relations with many countries.

DEFENCE

- No new deals struck as Pawar was busy ensuring old commitments are kept, especially from the fast-disintegrating Soviet Union.
- Plans to up exports to Rs 600 crore with private sector involvement. Anxiety about ad hoc defence cuts.
- Army re-deployed Assam and retained Kashmir. Panel set up on one-rank-one-pension after vocal demand, but move is seen as a mere ruse.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Liberalisation and positive signals on economic front, but inflation spiralling and little Morsened in critical areas like exit policy. National problems like Punjab and Kashmir have Worsened. Politically, smooth-sailing thanks to Rao's non-confrontationist dealings with Opposi-Non. Own partymen pose problem as they continue to seek the charismatic alternative.

YOUTH CONSTITUENCY

To the Fore

HE Congress(I) is at last trying to untie itself from the coat-tails of the Gandhi family. With Sonia Gandhi showing no inclination to join politics, party leaders, particularly the younger ones, are beginning to take initiative. Evidence: the recent two-day seminar in New Delhi of young Congress MPs at which crucial national issues and party matters were debated with unusual frankness.

Even though the seminar was organised by known Gandhi family loyalists Ghulam Nabi Azad and Jagdish Tytler—Union ministers—and young turks Tariq Anwar and Mukul Wasnik, the participants represented the party's entire spectrum. They included party President P.V. Narasimha Rao, Sharad Pawar, Arjun Singh and Madhavrao Scindia.

The topic that provoked as many as 32 speakers was religious fundamentalism. And discussing party problems, youth leader Anand Sharma stressed the need for selecting people with intrinsic merit for the AICC and PCCS. Narasimha Rao criticised the much postponed organisational elections and said the party needed those who could help in winning elections. The seminar also signalled the emergence of Narasimha Rao as the undisputed leader.

However, a lobby led by Youth Congress President Ramesh Chennithala saw the convention as a bid to usurp the youth constituency in the party. Indeed, the intention of Azad, Tytler and Anwar is to forge a platform of all those who joined the party during Sanjay Gandhi's time. Clearly, youth

power is coming to the fore in Congress(I) even if a septuagenarian is at its apex.

-ZAFAR AGHA

Narasimha Rao is playing it astutely to avoid abrading the Opposition whose support he may need. Says he: "We are evolving a new route of issue-based support." This is good strategy given the Opposition's compulsions. The Ajit and sjr camps may inevitably break away; the onus need not be on the Congress(I).

Meanwhile, democratisation is sweeping the Congress(I). State units may soon be restructured. And a hunt is on for a leader in Uttar Pradesh. In other states too, Narasimha Rao is looking for people who can run the party on their own without leaning on the high command.

Contrary to initial expectations, at the end of the budget session the CongRESERVATIONS

Stealing a March

Twas a strategy aimed at beating the master at his own game. And at the end of round one, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao managed to take away some of the shine from the Mandal messiah.

Two other factors compelled Narasimha Rao to take a stand on the prickly issue of job reservations: impending by-elections and the fact that the case is to come up for hearing in the Supreme Court. Keeping this in mind, the Government decided to accept 27 per cent reservations for the socially backward castes.

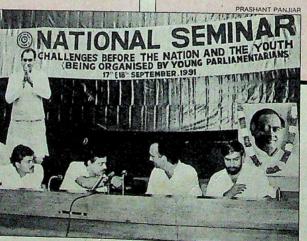
The BJP agreed. And the Left parties, while wanting the Congress(I) to adopt the National Front government's notification, were willing to cooperate. Janata Dal leader V.P. Singh, however, steered clear of the Government-sponsored meetings.

But the Congress(I) is not worried. It is willing to even amend the Constitution and, aside from the 27-per cent reservation for backwards, is reserving around 10 per cent for the poor among the forward castes, including Muslims and Christians.

For now, the Congress(I)'s strategy is only to reach a broad agreement. And isolate V.P. Singh. The results are already showing. The BJP has branded Singh as "insincere". And the Congress(I), while emphasising the need for "social justice with social harmony", blames Singh for inciting social tension.

But the wily raja of Manda is determined not to let his fiefdom slip through his fingers. He plans a rally in the capital; the theme: other parties are "antibackward castes". While the game of political one-

upmanship rages, the frustrated students have begun to take to the streets all over again. —ZAFAR AGHA



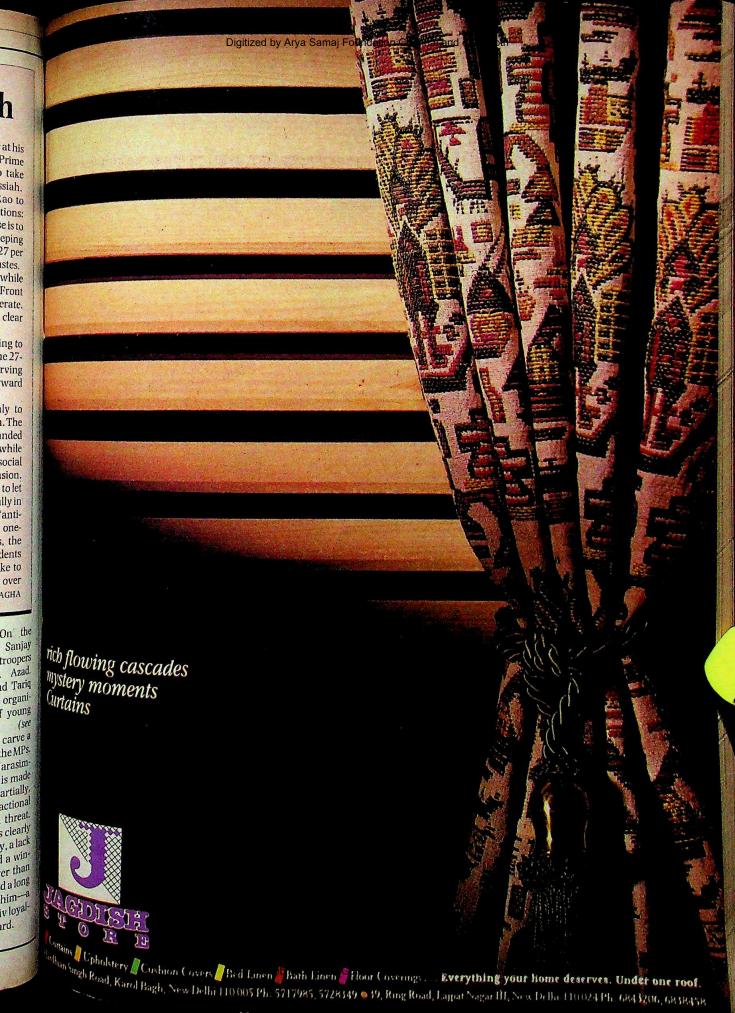
New Delhi seminar for young MPs: no coterie show

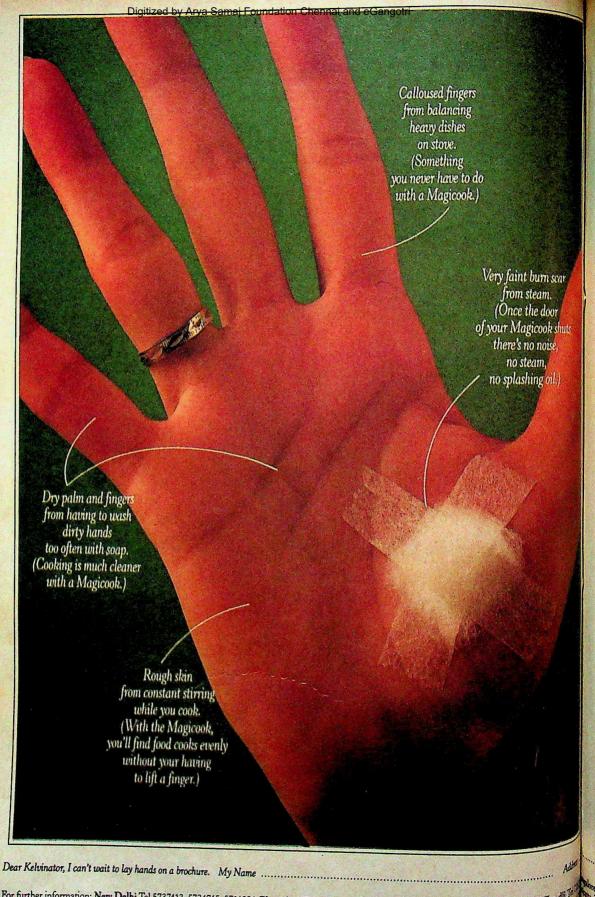
ress(I) looks more confident. The first 100 post-Rajiv days have passed without a major crisis. Narasimha Rao has establishedhimself as a leader above all factions while others like Pawar have cut out the muscle-flexing, giving him space for manoeuvre. Jockeying for second slot continues and Pawar and Scindia have emerged as a formidable

power centre. On the other hand, old Sanjay Gandhi storm-troopers are in cahoots. Azad, Jagdish Tytler and Tariq Anwar recently organised a seminar of young parliamentarians (set box). The aim: to carve a following among the MPs.

Inevitably, Narasimha Rao's position is made more secure, Impartially, he goes to all factional

meetings and is not seen as a threat. The non-leader of yesteryear is clearly today's leader, His non-strategy, a lack of pushy ambition, has proved a winner. Nothing makes this clearer that that even S.S. Ahluwalia waited a long time on August 16 to meet himpointer that the most rabid Rajiv loyalists are turning to the old guard.





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The Plot Thickens

Controversy takes new turn as Alemao surrenders





GOA'S local hero came crashing from his pedestal last fortnight. At the end of a protracted, suspensefilled drama, which had all the ingredients

ofatraditional Hindi masala film, Churchill Alemao found himself behind bars in the Central Jail in Aguada.

The state's first Catholic chief min-

Ister and hero of the Konkani language stir now faces charges of smuggling under COFEPOSA along with his brothers, Ciabro and Joaquim. In a somewhat anti-climactic denouement, Alemao tamely surrendered to the

police. He was far from contrite though. Patiently signing the 338-Page detention order, he claimed the charges against him were "totally lalse and held Chief Minister Ravi Naik responsible for his arrest.

The story goes back to May 16. Along the palm-fringed Goa coastnotorious for gold smuggling customs officer Costao Fernandes gave chase to a Contessa he was convinced was carrying contraband gold. Overtaking the car, he asked the occupant thoopen the boot. But when he refused.

Churchill Alemao at the police station

a struggle ensued and Fernandes, a black belt in karate, stabbed him in front of a horrified, 100-odd onlookers.

The stabbing created a political storm. For the driver was none other than Alvernaz, brother of the former chief minister. Fernandes was hauled up and subjected to sustained interrogation, much to the consternation of

Alemao claims the charges are false and holds the chief minister responsible for his arrest.

customs officials who claimed Fernandes was being treated like a criminal.

But Fernandes is not giving up without a fight. Says he: "Alvernaz offered me Rs 20 lakh to let him go. When I refused, he said he'd kill me." Since then he has received several threats to his life. His only consolation is that he had had the presence of mind to extract a gold biscuit from the boot packed with the contraband, and show it to the crowd. "I thought people would help me after I showed them the gold, but no one came forward," says

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri Fernandes. Sensing trouble, he punctured the car's tyres and fled.

Customs officials claim they have witnesses who can testify what happened next. The Alemao brothers arrived on the scene, allegedly carted away all the gold-estimated to be

worth close to Rs 2 crorethen took Alvernaz to hospital where he was declared dead on arrival. The customs are now trying to establish a nexus between Alemao and Xavier Marquis, a Bombay-based politician-turned-alleged

smuggler. The fact that he owns a number of trawlers and is developing a beach resort at Varca with Marquis as a partner add to

this suspicion.

The local press, meanwhile, is raking up Alemao's political connections. It has dragged Sports Minister Sanjay Banand Fisheries Minister Ratnakar Chopdekar into the controversy, alleging the gold was taken to Bandekar's

home before it was shifted to another location. Customs officials have launched a massive hunt for Bandekar's bodyguard, S. Desai, who is missing and is believed to have seen Bandekar burying the gold in his garden.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Dr Wilfred de Souza, who has long harboured ambitions of becoming chief minister, is backing Bandekar and Chopdekar's claims of innocence.

> 'I am convinced the two are innocent," he declared. De Souza clearly has his own axe to grind. With support from Bandekar and Chopdekar, he hopes to unseat Chief Minister Naik.

But the canny chief minister has his own strategy well worked out. Though he claims "there is nothing political about Alemao's arrest", in signing the customs case, he has, with one master stroke, countered all threats to his position. For, by aligning themselves with those allegedly involved in smuggling, the dissidents must necessarily tarnish their own public image. Given the web of political links in this intricate drama however, it may be premature to declare the real winners of the battle.

-ARUN KATIYAR in Panjim



CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER

Moving Un

Seshan to be shifted out

"NDIA's volatile chief election commissioner (CEC) just can't seem to keep himself out of the news. Like the proverbial bad penny, T.N. Seshan is back again, this time for coasting through an aborted impeachment move by opposition parties and angling for a gubernatorial posting in exchange for relinquishing his office.

While the Government heaved a sigh of relief when the Opposition did a volte face on its impeachment threat, Seshan's demand has put it in a quandary. Some cabinet members argue that Seshan does not have the temperament for the role. "He's like a bull in a china shop who takes the china shop wherever he goes," says a minister.

But despite these reservations, the Government seems keen to ease Seshan out of his present office. One indication was the sounding out of Dr V.S. Rama Devi, the present secretary, Official Languages Wing in the Law and Justice Ministry, for the coveted post. Rama Devi had last year officiated as cec when V.S. Peri Sastry fell ill. Also in the running is former Tamil Nadu chief secretary, M.M. Rajendran.

In the conduct of the Lok Sabha polls Seshan seems to have made more foes than friends. While the BIP was upset at the postponement of the Punjab polls, the CPI(M) was agitated by his decision to allow voting in Tripura. The Janata Dal too criticised him for countermanding polls in several Bihar constituencies. And the Congress(I) opposed his decision to delay the last phase of elections following Rajiv Gandhi's death. Commented CPI(M) MP, Saifuddin Chowdhary: "Rightly or wrongly, he became the centre of controversy. This is not good for the Election Commission.'

The impetus for the National Front-Left combine launching the impeachment move came from the forthcoming by-elections. Around 19 seats-five in Bihar, four in Uttar Pradesh, two each in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, and one each in Delhi, West Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Gujarat-are up for grabs. Says Ram Vilas Paswan, Janata Dal MP: "For the by-elections we want someone impartial."

But even before the motion could take off, the Opposition realised that with a strength of just 245, they were well short of the 256 required to push the impeachment through. Acknowledged K.R. Malkani of the BJP: "We do not have the majority to carry out the impeachment." On its part, the Congress(I) did not want the CEC's office tarnished and so agreed to jettison him if the move was dropped. A series of meetings between Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and opposition leaders led to the compromise.

Seshan claims he is unperturbed by these developments. Assuming an uncharacteristically low profile, he says: "I am now like a piece of furniture." But with his seat proving too hot to handle, this is one piece of furniture the Government may be inclined to -W.P.S. SIDHU

Storm Signals

Anger over accord failure



MIZORAM

THE insurgency is long over but another struggle may have just begun. Last fortnight. President of the Mizo National Front (MNF), Zoramthanga,

along with former commander-inchief of the disbanded Mizo National Army (MNA) and now MNF Vice-President. Tawnluia, was in the capital to discuss the non-implementation of the 1986 Mizoram accord with Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. With their veiled threat that some who dropped their guns may now go underground again, the portents for the state seem rather ominous.

Congress(I) Chief Minister Lalthanhawla dismisses it: "It is just an empty threat. The MNF is struggling for survival and has to resort to such tactics." But the prime minister realises that things could be serious, which is why he has promised to talk about the former MNA guerrillas' complaints with Lalthanhawla. Among their major grouses: they have yet to receive Rs 10,000 of the Rs 40,000 promised to them in mid-1986 for housing. They also allege discrimination by the state Government for supporting the MNF.

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Zoramthanga, Tawnluia: veiled threats



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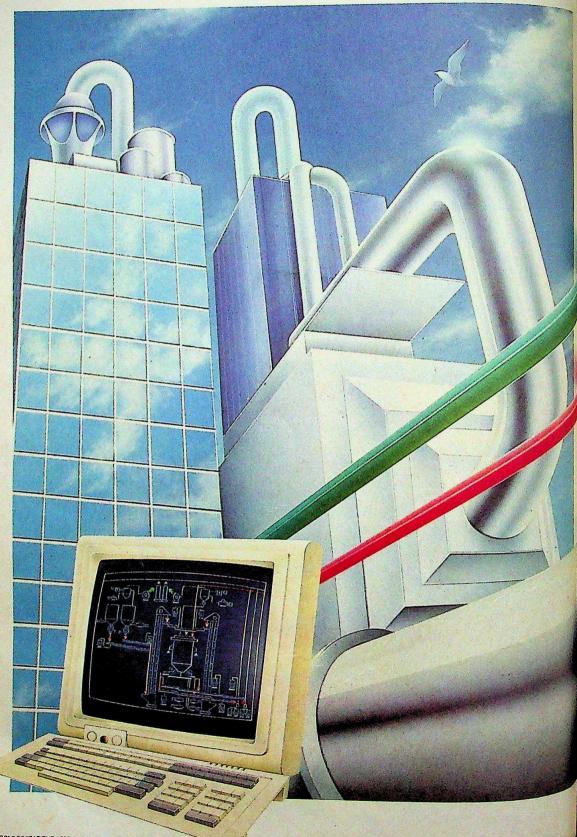
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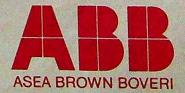
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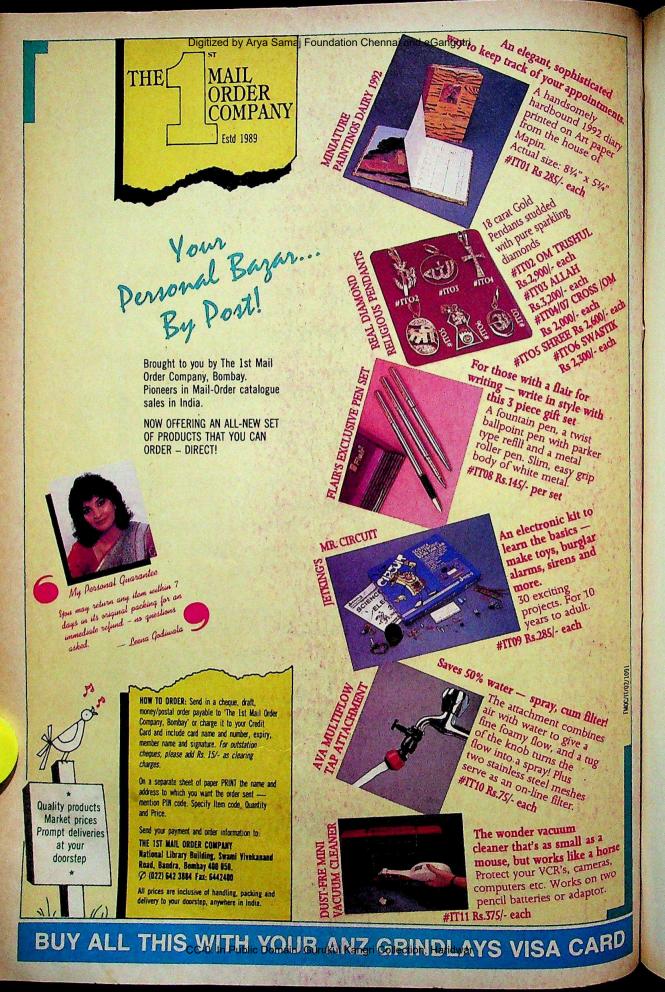
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pensation for families whose kin were killed or whose houses were destroyed in operations between 1966 and 1986. The Centre has set aside Rs 15 crore for the estimated 2,000 beneficiaries. Zoramthanga blames the delay on Lalthanhawla's fear of an MNF comeback. Says he: "Let them release it now that the Congress(I) is in power. They can take credit for it. "

Both he and Tawnluia say the Centre would do well not to believe reports that former guerrillas have become used to the good life. Their poverty overground is enough to kindle the fire in their bellies, they say.

They may be right. Late in August. 200 former guerrillas met at Bung Bangla, a picnic spot near Aizawl, to debate the failure of the accord. If strife is not to return to the state, the Centre had better act fast.

-RAMESH MENON

KARNATAKA

Breaking Free

Hegde for fracturing party

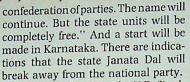


SENIOR Janata Dal leader Ramakrishna Hegde seems to have hit upon a radical prescription for the virus of squabbling plaguing his party. The

antidote: break up the party into independent units and form a confederation of the units at the national level.

Declares Hegde: "We will demand that the national Janata Dal become a

Party leaders: seeking relevance



The tussle between the V.P. Singh and Ajit Singh factions at the top has thrown the state units into total disarray. It is forcing local leaders to think of alternatives. Hegde points out: "If the national leadership continues to live in a crisis, the state units will have to assert themselves more.'

The idea of Hegde and other senior leaders like H.D. Deve Gowda is to float a regional party, which will help in two ways. One, it will immunise the local units from the crises afflicting the top brass at the national level. Two, it will enable the new party to attract new leaders, who will provide an alternative to the Congress(I) in the state.

The Janata Dal is being increasingly marginalised as the main opposition party in the state, and is failing to take advantage of the growing dissidence in the Congress(I). In the recent assembly session a no-confidence motion was moved by all the opposition parties. The Congress(I) dissidents backed out and the motion fell through. But the Janata Dal's attack on the Government lacked fire. And it is the BJP, with only four members to the Janata Dal's 22, that seems all set to take on the mantle of an opposition party.

It is this fear of being edged out from the state political arena that is compelling the leaders to think in terms of drastic remedies. For a state that gave birth to the Janata Party and the Janata Dal, blazing a fresh party trail is an acceptable way out.

-SARITHA RAI



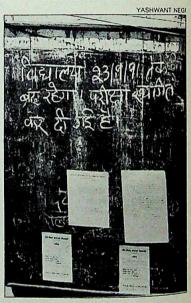
Shock Waves

Stripping causes outrage

Y any standards it was a scandalous incident. But in Pahari Dhiraj, one of the most orthodox localities of Old Delhi, it stood out as particularly shocking. Last fortnight. about 40 tenth standard students of the Laxmi Devi Jain Girls Senior Secondary School were made to strip by their principal, Shail Bala Gupta, apparently to recover Rs 150 lost by a classmate, Ruchi.

It was enough to anger the parents of those involved. They lodged an FIR, accusing librarian Urmil Gambhir and physical training teacher Ranjit Kaur

Notice of school closure



Bakshi of forcing the teenagers to undress inside a classroom.

Protests followed, forcing the 90year-old organisation which runs the school—Jain Shiksha Pracharak Society-to close its four educational institutions in the area. Society treasurer Padam Prasad Jain found it tough to evade responsibility. Says he: "We are ashamed. We have no explanation. Neither do the police.

Sympathy has poured in from all quarters. But even a week after the incident, those in the eye of the storm seem stunned. Says an angry father. "Four days have passed but my daughter has not eaten. Who will heal her scar?" Nobody knows.

-VIJAY KRANTI

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WEST BENGAL

Shifting Stand

CPI(M) debates change



THE CPI(M) is in ferment in its bastion of West Bengal. And pointers are that the party will have to water down its ideological position following

the tumultuous changes in the Soviet Union recently.

As the party's Madras convention in January draws closer, 1.87 lakh party members, the many times more cadres, and nearly 1,000 local committees are busy debating the issues

Lenin's statue in Calcutta: up against orthodoxy

thrown up by the movement towards capitalism in Eastern Europe. But the all-powerful Central Committee in late August called upon, ostrich-like, the rank and file to "carry forward the proud heritage of Marxism-Leninism".

Not all top leaders, however, refuse to read the writing on the wall. Says Sailen Dasgupta, Left Front chairman and cPI(M) state secretary: "A fresh ideological programme will be worked out at Madras within the Marxist-Leninist framework." Chief Minister Jyoti Basu, the quintessential pragmatist, too told reporters last fortnight in London on the last leg of his European

visit to woo NRI investments among other things: "There is room for a new kind of socialism.'

Not satisfied with such pious sentiments, the party workers still want an explanation: Why did the senior leaders fail to foresee the radical denouement in the Soviet Union despite making regular trips there? More so because as far back as the 1964 Burdwan plenum. the party was warned about "the danger of revisionism paving the way for restoration of capitalism", a trend that began apparently under the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev.

It was the Burdwan plenum again that gave the CPI(M) its ideological stand: this would be the era of transition from capitalism to socialism. Now that prediction has gone haywire in Eastern Europe. Says Subhas Chakraborty, mayerick sports minister and impresario of glitzy filmland jamborees: "Socialism is moving backwards. To keep pace with changing times, the party programme should also be changed.'

Party ideologues are still not convinced. As Goutam Deb, state committee member and housing minister, says: "Looking objectively at the situation in the country, there is no need to change our programme." Yet, moderate leaders admit that some lessons will have to be learnt from the post-putsch Soviet Union.

Besides, now that Soviet communism is passe, the question arises whether the CPI(M) will take its new moorings from the only remaining communist monolith, China? Last fortnight four Central Committee members, including state leaders Biman Basu and Anil Biswas, did visit China at the invitation of the Chinese Communist Party.

But no further indication is forthcoming. CPI(M) leaders also argue that the visit was scheduled much before the Moscow events. Says Dasgupta: "We acknowledge neither Soviet Union nor China as the communist movement leader. We make our own judgements on the basis of principles of Marxism-Leninism and our own experiences."

But those judgements have clearly been found wanting in a world where capitalism has gained the upper hand. As the party rank and file ask uncomfortable questions, hardliners have suddenly been pushed into a corner from where there is no escape. But only the Madras convention will finally decide whether the pro-changers are going to triumph.

SOUTIK BISWAS

RAJASTHAN

Crisis Control

Shekhawat calls ally's bluff



THE BJP Government in Rajasthan has been hanging by the slenderest of threads. And last fortnight its coalition partner, Janata Dal (Digvijay),

almost snapped that thread. The sulking Digvijay group threatened to pull down the Government after BIP-men were appointed chairmen to five important urban improvement trusts without consulting it.

The threat was menacing enough.



Digvijay, Shekhawat: patching up

For, the BJP, with its 85 members, depends heavily on the 25 Digvijay faction members for its survival in the 200-strong House. And with Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Devi Singh Bhati—a Digvijay faction leader—threatening to quit, the crisis deepened. The recalcitrant group even boycotted all official work in the state secretariat, while Chief Minister Bhairon Singh Shekhawat was away to Calcutta.

However, the crisis was soon averted, thanks to the efforts of the crafty chief minister. Willing to bend but not to crawl, Shekhawat offered to accommodate the griping legislators in soing abroad can be a pleasure

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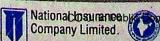
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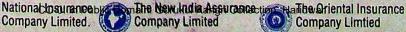
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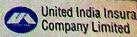
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the distribution of the spoils of office. Said opposition leader Harideo Joshi: This has once again proved that the gp sonly concern is to stay in power by hook or by crook." Apparently, the noponsense politician made it amply clear that he was only willing to go so far and no further. If need be, he would even order fresh elections. However, the chief minister denied that he had ever threatened to dissolve the Assembly.

Either way, Shekhawat had called the Digvijay group's bluff. He knows they have no option but to support the Government. He has now told them in no uncertain terms that any attempts at political blackmail are not going to work. Moreover, any move by the Janata Dal(D) to topple the state Govemment would be like committing political harakiri. Realising that they're inno shape to win an election on their own as they hardly have a mass base in the state, they came around swiftly. Even the stubborn Bhati was suitably chastened as the chief minister threatened him with dismissal.

Having kissed and made up, Shekhawat and Digvijay Singh denied existence of the crisis altogether. Dedared a beaming chief minister: "There never was and there is no crisis. The crisis was created by the media.' While Singh confessed to differences which they "would thrash out across the table", he was quite categorical that "there is no danger to the future of the coalition".

Meanwhile, the Congress(I) was busy trying to extract the maximum political mileage from the situation. Said Joshi: "Many of the Janata Dal(D) MLAs have met me privately wanting to join the Congress(I)."

While the veracity of that may be questionable, one thing is true: the lanata Dal(D) has been a thorn in the BIP's side for a while. Cashing in on its hold on the Government, it secured as many as 16 ministerial berths for its 25 members. Not satisfied with that, it's been trying to grab lucrative posts in Rovernment for its remaining MLAs. But its efforts have always come a cropper because of stiff resistance from

This time around, the Janata Dal(D) raised its confrontationist head again. Only to withdraw soon. It has tealised that its grip on the state Govenment is limited. Although it may have been tamed for the moment, the Pertinent question now is: for how long

-N.K. SINGH in Jaipur

GUIARAT

Marital Woes

Chaudhary creates stir



HE knew he was skaton thin ice. ing But he didn't expect the ground to crack beneath him. When Amarsinh Chaudhary, 50, former Gu-

jarat chief minister, recently formalised his five-year-old relationship with Congress(I) leader, Nisha Gameti, 40-without divorcing his first wife. Gajraben-he created a minor storm in political circles in the state.

Opposition leaders were quick to berate the former chief minister publicly and make political capital of the his responsibility towards Gajraben and his children. Chaudhary argued "I have shown the courage of conviction by marrying Nisha unlike many others who indulge in philandering.'

But the BJP women's wing is not impressed. It has instead sent feelers to Gajraben, indicating its willingness to support her if she chooses to assert her legal rights. After maintaining a studied silence, Gajraben finally gave vent to her feelings last fortnight. Describing Nisha as a vishkanya (venomous lady), she declared: "This marriage is unacceptable to me and my sons." But she is yet to decide whether she will contest the marriage in court.

Unlike Chaudhary, Nisha stands on secure legal ground. When she first met him in the mid-'80s, she was already married and a mother of two. Last year, she divorced her husband, paving the way for her marriage with





Opposition leaders are using Chaudhary's marriage to make political capital.

occasion. Criticism came from other quarters too. Rival Congressmen and a series of social work groups protested in support of Gajraben and her three children. "Chaudhary's act has come as a blow to the basic values in public life. He should be ostracised," seethed Kokilaben Vyas, a member of the Madhvsinh Solanki faction. And social groups described the marriage as "immoral, unethical and damaging to the social fabric"

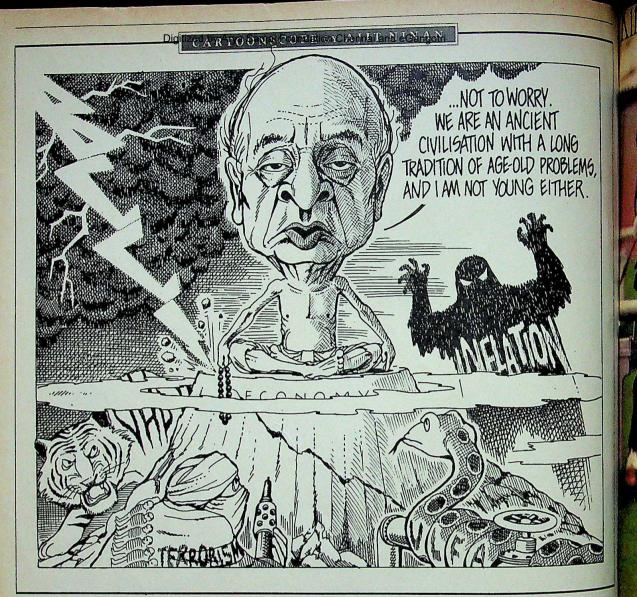
Chaudhary, who married Nishadaughter of an Adivasi Congress(I) leader-under the Special Marriages Act, is however seeking shelter in the fact that "tribals are not bound by Hindu law". Denying he has shunned

Chaudhary with his second wife. Nisha (left); and Gajraben, his first wife

Chaudhary. Reacting emotionally to the mud being flung at her. Nisha says: "Chaudhary saheb has given me status by marrying me. If he wanted, we could have continued our relationship tacitly. Would the so-called women's organisations have been happy then?"

Perhaps not. But neither has the marriage deterred them from moralising on the issue. In the midst of this cacophony of criticism there are a few dissenting voices. "Chaudhary must be congratulated for his conviction in publicising his second marriage," says Sooryakant Parikh, a social worker. "Rarely do politicians convert their illicit relationships into marriages.'

State Congress(I) President Natwarlal Shah puts the entire fiasco in a relatively objective perspective: "There wasn't any need for such a hue and cry. It's his personal life and will not affect the party's image in any way." But whether it does affect Chaudhary's own political standing, is a different issue. -UDAY MAHURKAR



SIGN POSTS

PROPOSED: by Union Health Minister M.L. Fotedar, to make the two-child



norm obligatory for eligibility to any elected office, from panchayat level to Parliament. The minister believes the problem of over-population is so serious that

ordinary methods will not help and drastic measures are required.

INAUGURATED: by Minister of Civil Aviation Madhavrao Scindia, a computer system, for informing Indian Airlines passengers about delayed flights. The system will call all passengers who give their telephone numbers while booking tickets to inform them of the revised timings.

APOLOGY ISSUED: to the Hindujas, by the US business magazine Fortune for publishing damaging statements about them. The September 23 issue clarifies that the Hindujas, featured in Fortune's list of the world's top 75 billionaires, have not been charged with receiving illegal kickbacks.

COMPLAINT FILED: in a New Delhi city court, against Sonia Gandhi and Rajesh Khanna by two independent

candidates from the New Delhi constituency. They claim a news photograph had Khanna indicating the party symbol to Sonia at a polling booth, and influenc-

ing voters, violating the model code.

DIED: After a prolonged illness, Durga Khote, 86, at her Cuffe Parade resi-

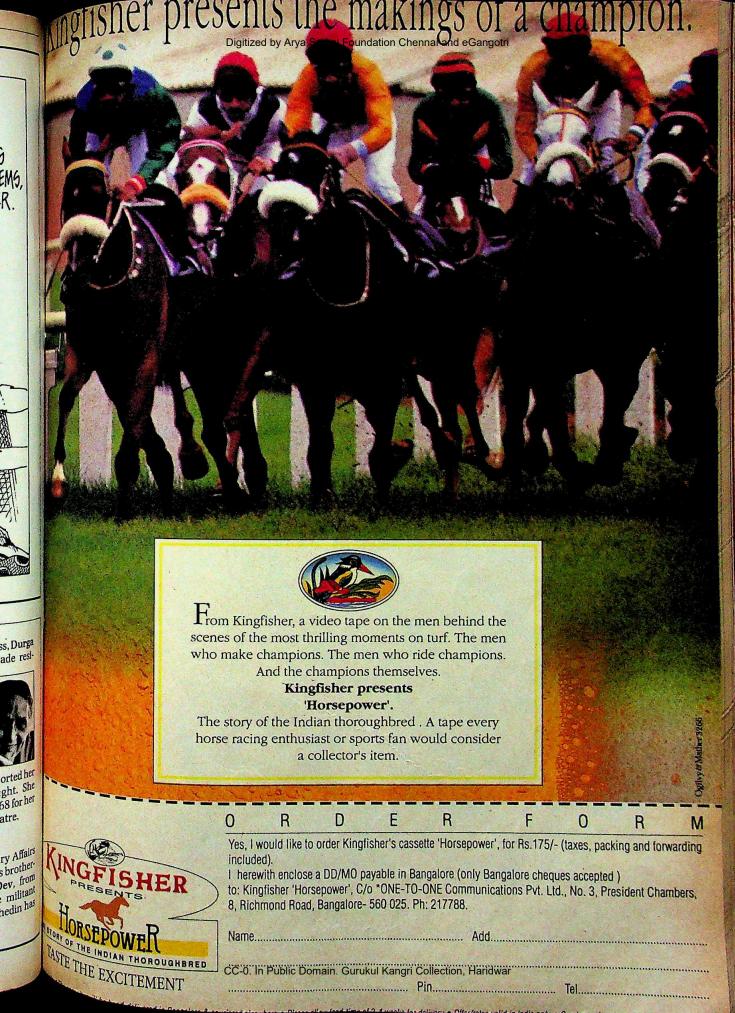
dence in Bombay. The veteran film and stage actress made her debut with a threeminute role in a silent film in 1929. She got a break with Ayodhyacha Raja, a 1932 Mara-



thi feature film, which transported her to stardom virtually overnight. She received the Padmashri in 1968 for her contribution to film and theatre.

KIDNAPPED: Parliamentary Affair Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad's brother in-law, Tassaduq Ahmed Dev, from his Srinagar residence. The militant organisation Al-Umar Mujahedin has claimed responsibility.

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Body Business

With the traditional occupation of pottery no longer viable, most women of this small village in Kerala have switched to prostitution, with active encouragement from their men.

By ANAND VISWANATHAN

THE wheel has stopped spinning in the potters' village of Aruvacode. And its inhabitants have switched to a calling no less old. Edged out of their traditional profession, the women of this hamlet, nestled in the verdant hills of Malappuram district in Kerala, have over the years taken up an altogether different vocation to survive: prostitution. And the entire village has become in a way an extended brothel

For the 200-odd women of the 100 families in the village, prostitution is now the only source of income. Often entire families are in the business with the men soliciting customers for their mothers, sisters, wives and daughters.

Take Kunhi, for instance. A local labourer, he solicits clients for his 18-year-old daughter. Then there's Visalakshi, 48, whose sons solicit

for her. Now even her five daughters have joined the business. Recently she bought her son, Sasi, a scooter rickshaw. With a purpose. Most of his passengers end up as their clients. Today, Visalakshi has Rs 2 lakh in her bank account at Nilambur.

For 20-year-old Santha too, prostitution has been a lucrative business. She charges Rs 50 and entertains around 10 clients a day. Over the years she's bought 20 gold sovereigns, gold jhumkas, bangles and chains.

Beneath the glitter lie the economic compulsions driving these women to prostitution. Ammini, 30, was deserted by her husband a week after their wedding. Today, she has two daughters but cannot recollect who fathered them. Says she: "My customers are my God, giving me hope for tomorrow.'

Not surprisingly, many are quite blase about their occupation. For instance. Santha remembers strange days W looking men entering the house asking for her mother and grandmother. "The still come. But now they want me."For the women of Aruvacode-a settleme of Adi-Andhras—the slide into prosite more li tion had a predictable pattern. Appar ently, these people originally came har DIOCUT centuries ago from Madurai with the Nilambur royal family. They worked royal potters in the region's temple. However, after Independence and the merger of princely states, patronage declined. Illiterate and unskilled in a other trade, the potters of Aruvacce were struggling to survive. The work turned to prostitution.

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Today, the only fear is the police Over the past year the local police have collected up to Rs 2.5 lakh in fines univ the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) At 1956—a record of sorts in Kerala—a

"Most of the time, policemen behave like saints. But whenever they feel like it, they come here."

'Captain' Narayani, the most organised brothelowner in the village, uses her daughter's tailor shop as a front. She won her title while leading a rebellion against a policeman who was demanding free service. The police picked up one of her 'girls' last fortnight but she managed to secure her release after faking a medical certificate.

82 INDIA TODAY ◆ OCTOBER 15, 1991

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'Idon't earn mough for my all village ive children. and there are ir men. pers strang days when I house askin don't get any nother. "The work. So it is vant me." F -a settleme into prosite more lucrative to ttern. Appa procure clients lly came her

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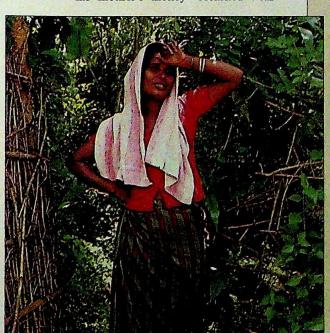
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bachave been around 400 arrests. But that doesn't deter the women. As Subispector of Police V.P. Radhakrishnan The high volume of collection that these women have the bility to pay."

But the women have igs of getting around he police. Their children atch all the entry points the village. Whenever heyspot a police jeep they ace down the streets houting the password tochugard odu (beware). In fact, one way of not thing caught is to operde outside the village. As prosperous anikanadan, 28. who aps for his sisters and sensuous Vichitra, "I never allow khitra to operate here, it on't worth it."

Yet many women antain a veneer of res-Actability, Like Thambuwho refuses to be otographed esn't want to spoil the is of her three collegesing sons. Many have nescaped the clutches prostitution. Forty five-Thanga, for inn_{red} gave up prostituwhen her daughter

got a job with the Kerala Government. "I was working to live. Now my daughter's income will help run my family," she says. Similarly, when Chandran, 20who bought a fishing net by stealing his mother's money-returned with



"In the past month alone, I have paid Rs 2,500 in fines. But I don't really care. It's an occupational hazard."

Mani pimps for his sister. Chinnamma, to supplement his meagre earnings as a coolie. When Chinnamma takes off on her frequent trips to Bangalore, Udhagamandalam, Hyderabad and Madras, her children are looked after by his wife, Sarojini. He gets a cut for this favour. With a night's earnings going up to

Rs 750, Chinnamma can certainly afford it.

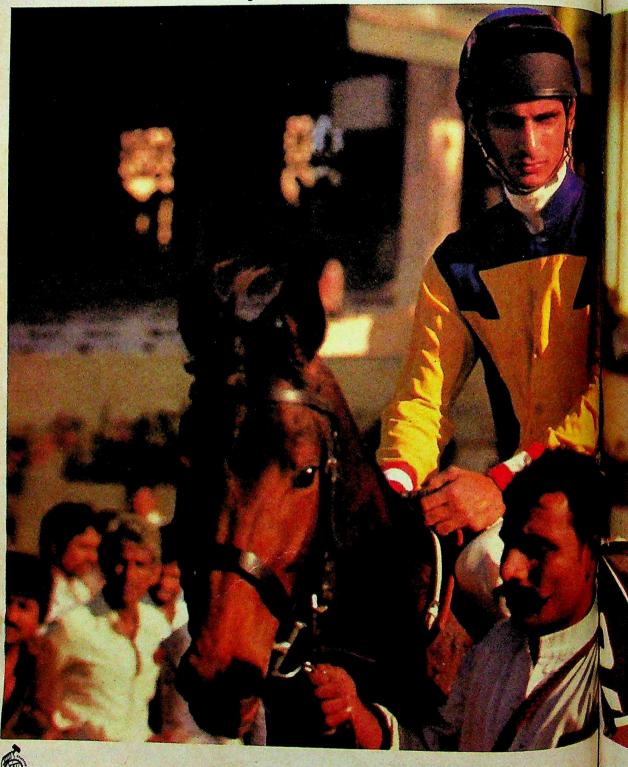
Thangamani

became a prostitute after being raped by a local man in the rubber plantation nearby. She was paid Rs 25 for it. Now earning Rs 500 a day, she spends half of it on treatment for gonorrhea. She remembers neither when her mother died nor who her father is. All she knows is

she's been here for

a very long time.

You don't have to be a five me to be a Raymond's man.



fiveime Indian Derby winner



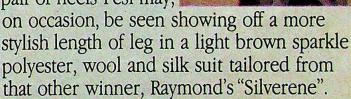
In a nine-year racing career, 25-year old Pesi Shroff was voted Champion Jockey by the RWITC for fourteen seasons. He has contested 2383 races, won 746 and placed second or third in another 817.

A phenomenal record by any reckoning,

Indian or international.

He has won the Indian Derby five times and the Indian Turf Invitation on four occasions, the 2000 Guineas thrice, the 1000 Guineas twice, winning most and placing in all the great Indian Classics.

When not showing the opposition a clean pair of heels Pesi may,



You don't have to be a racing legend to be a Raymond's man. For that matter, you don't even have to be a Raymond's man.

... but it helps.



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Chinnamma

(left) often services rich customers outside the village. The most popular and vocal of the village's prostitutes, she claims she was married to a man in Wynad district who threw her out after a few weeks. The police dispute her story. Their version: she was chased away from Wynad six years ago to discourage her from prostitution and she has never been married.



"I sleep with a different man every night but there is no one I can share my life with."

enough money, his mother Thithi gave up paripadi (whoring).

Despite the pressure, a few families still cling to their traditional profession. For instance, Natarajan, 51, and his family of five make barely Rs 800 a month, but they steadfastly resist any temptation to opt for more lucrative work. Some, like Vlayudham, rent out their property to prostitutes. "I make an extra 500 rupees a month," he says.

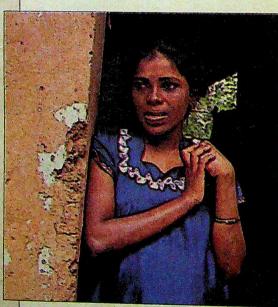
Most prostitutes operate from outhouses built in the compound of their huts. "We have a conscience. Wedon't

entertain clients at home. avers Kamala, 40, a madam. Some receive clients in huts built from funds pooled in by the prostitutes.

The women of Aruvacode are trapped. Many Malayalees returning from the Gulf head straight for the village. And though the women regularly visit the Government Hospital at Nilambur for a check-up, many suffer from sexually transmitted diseases. Says Dr E.K. Ummer: "Almost 99 per cent of them are carriers of syphilitic viruses. Even AIDS can't be ruled out as there's no facility to detect it.'

Yet they carry on unaffected. During the Onam celebrations they propitiate their kula deivam (clan goddess) Mariamma "to help our women get more customers today". And each year, it seems, the deity answers their prayers.

Shyamala was initiated into the trade at 13. Married at the age of 18, she was deserted after the wedding night by her Nair husband. A jealous client scarred her face for life with acid, blinding her in the right eye. Despite being fined Rs 1,000 last fortnight, she continues to solicit men at a cinema hall in Nilambur.



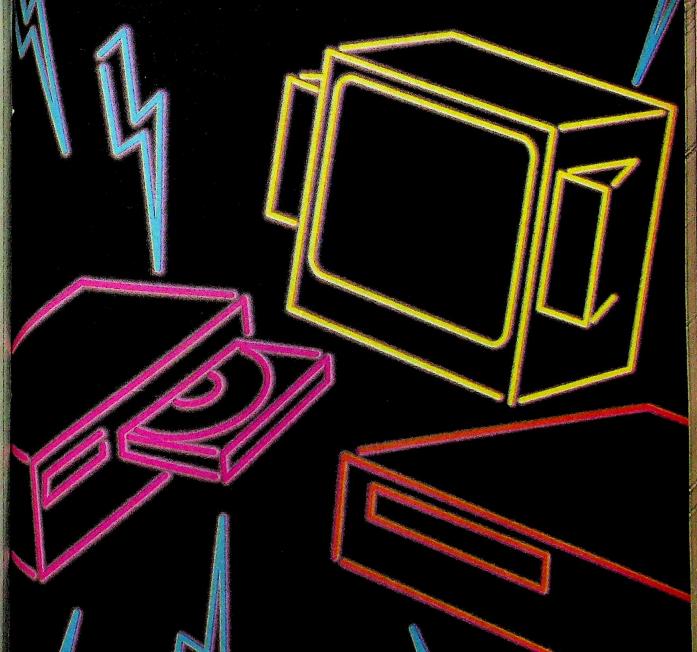
"If my face wasn't scarred, four nights in Mysore would have got me Rs 2,000."

1001D/ANY

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

ENTERTAINMENT ELECTRONICS

WAYES OF CHANCE



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By SURAJEET DAS GUPTA

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n... Amazing You will find ne to expect on one now

ette Tapes i-Resolution playing time playing time

The past five years have been a roller-coaster ride for the Rs 3,200-crore entertainment electronics industry. The new dream merchants set up shops rapidly. Established manufacturers furiously expanded their units. Cashing in on the consumer boom, companies introduced new models, penetrating new markets. And they gave attractive discounts to the dealers. All this was backed by aggressive marketing and heavy advertising on television, radio or the print media.

But the honeymoon is over. The country's entertainment electronics industry-consisting of television, au-

FM			1 1		1	10	0
in minion	INDU	IST	RY			90-91	
RADIO	7.5	7.5	8.0	8.0	8.5	10.0	
MONO CASSETTE RECORDERS	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.8	2.0	
MONO RADIO RECORDER	8.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.7	2.0	
STEREO AUDIO RECORDER	0.4	0.5	0.6	8.0	0.9	1.2	

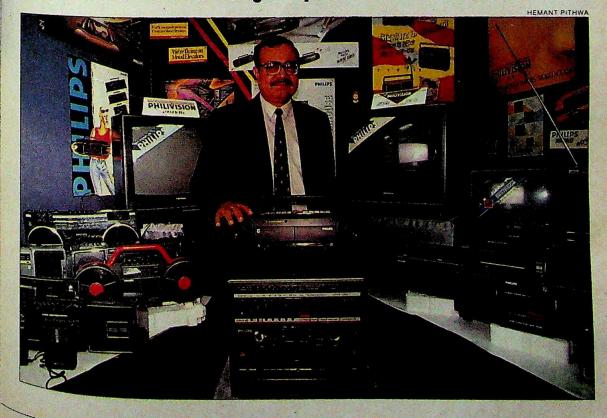
Chart by B.K. SHARN

dio systems, video cassette recorders and component manufacturers—is going through turbulent times. Says Sonu Mirchandani, managing director of Onida Savak Ltd, the makers of Onida television: "What we are seeing is the final shake-out in the industry. After this only a few manufacturers who have the clout and the quality will survive. The others will have to close down.'

Mirchandani is not off the mark. For, after growing at a heady pace of over 40 per cent annually (in terms of turnover) between 1985-86 and 1988-89, the entertain-

MANOHAR DAVID, senior vice-president, Philips

"We are going in for high-volume growth and innovation in our range of products."





"We are seeing the final shake-out. After this only a few companies of quality will survive."

SONU MIRCHANDANI, managing director, Onida Savak Ltd

ment electronics industry grew at a mere 7 per cent between 1989 and 1990, sales went up from Rs 2,965 crore to Rs 3,175 crore.

Suddenly, manufacturers are waking up to the grim reality that electronic gadgets are no longer selling. The television industry—which constitutes more than 60 per cent of the consumer electronics' total turnover-is an indicator of the trend. Production of colour television sets stagnated at 1.2 million sets over the past two years. And production of black and white television sets fell from 4 million to 3.6 million sets between 1989 and 1990.

Not surprisingly, a host of units have closed shop. Just seven years ago, as many as 200 manufacturers were rushing to grab a piece of the colour television pie-today only 50 of them remain. Of them, many have shut down. Over the same period, the number of black and white TV manufacturers has dropped from 1,000 to 100-odd.

Of course, there is a silver lining to it all. Audio companies, which had taken the back seat to televisions for years, are now back in business. The Rs 700-crore audio industry grew at a comfortable clip of around 20 per cent between 1989-90 and 1990-91. But with television manufacturers like Onida, Weston, Videocon and Televista diversifying, it's even becoming tougher for the 3,500-odd small-scale audio sector unitsconstituting nearly 60 per cent of the audio turnover—to survive. Says Ashok K, Jaisingh, central president of the All India Radio and Electronics Association: "If the trend continues, at least 20 to 30 per cent of the small-scale sector units will have to close shop."

BMW :

HE news is not cheerful in the emerging areas in entertainment electronics either: the video market, the high-tech compact discs and the world of children's video games. With the Government upping the excise duty on VCRs by 17 per cent, manufacturers expect production to go down by 20 per cent this year. Worse, as this has widened the gap between Indian and foreign VCRs, smuggling has increased. According to one estimate, nearly 60 per cent of the VCRs and VCPs sold in 1990 in urban markets was imported. Though the Government recently cleared three projects for manufacturing 3 lakh VCRs and VCPs. their future now hangs in balance because of the foreign exchange crunch and stagnation of demand.

But undeterred, manufacturers are still actively wooing buyers. Videocon, for instance, is trying to score on pricing-its VCRs and VCPs, it claims, are 5 per cent cheaper than others as it has gone for a two-head machine rather than a four-head machine which costs much more. Onida, which got into the market only 10 months ago, is targeting the upper end of the market by introducing high-tech features like an auto head-cleaner

and a digital tracking system.

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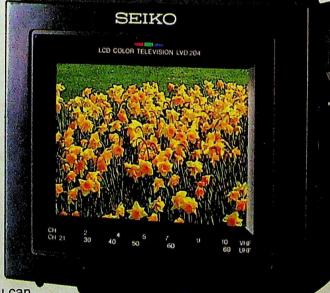
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"With profit margins under pressure, there has been a polarisation of brands."

T.P.G. NAMBIAR, managing director, BPL India Ltd

Yet the foreign exchange restrictions have been crippling for many. For instance, compact disc production is completely unviable as it depends heavily on imports. Moreover, the volumes are too small to justify large-scale production. Similarly, the video games industry, introduced in 1987, is stagnant as the entire kit has to beimported. Laments B.L. Malhotra, general manager of

Samurai Electronics, a leader in this field: "The Government isn't keen on indigenisation. The custom duties range from 90 per cent to 150 percent. And the products are expensive." But Samurai isn't giving up. It recently introduced a cheaper model at two-thirds the previous price. hoping to sell 3,000 video games a month.

Expectedly, the components industry is also going through hard times. The Government projected an investment of Rs 3,000 crore in the eighth plan in the component industry. But the industry estimates it won't be more than Rs 1.000 crore. For instance.

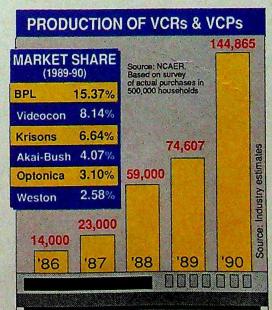
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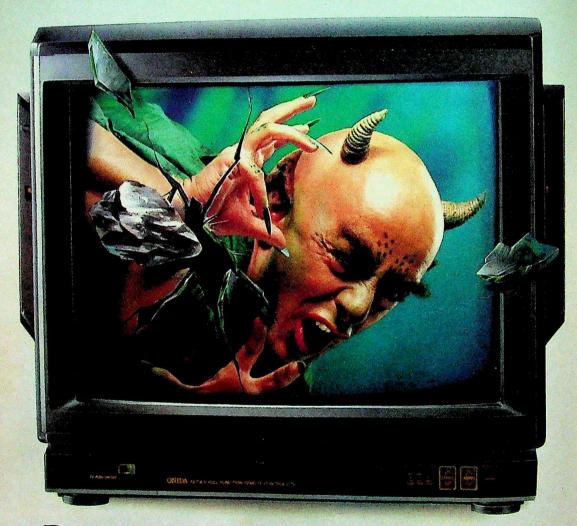
while the total installed capacity for colour television tubes is 1.75 million, production is way below demand. Even the black and white picture tube segment is suffering from over-capacity. While the total installed capacity was 15 million, the demand was a mere four million-with most units functioning at 40 per cent capacity. The result: three of the 12 units stopped

production last year.

Says Satish Kaura, chairman and managing director of Samtel Color Ltd, one of the largest manufacturers of picture tubes: "We've had virtually no growth. The rupee has been depreciating, duties have gone up and there's a foreign exchange crunch. If no further relief is coming, tube manufacturers might come to a grinding halt.'

Picture tube manufacturers aren't the only ones facing a crunch. Other component industries like deflection components, electronic tuners and magnetic heads are also stuck with large unutilised capacities. For instance, three





Don't just envy the ONIDATV. Buy it.

ONIDA 21

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manufacturers of audio magnetic heads closed shop recently as they were unable to compete with imported heads priced at more or less the same level. The reason: the Government has slapped a 50-per cent custom duty on raw materials which have to be imported. Worse, production of DC micro-motors used in two-in-ones and tape recorders fell by about 4 per cent between 1989 and 1990. Similarly, electronic tuner manufacturers are working at 50 per cent of their capacities and are making a desperate bid to export their wares.

But without much success. Many manufacturers are realising that the process of indigenisation of components might not be viable. Samtel, for instance, floated a new company which was licensed to manufacture glass shells—an essential part for the manufacture of television picture tubes which is imported at the moment. But the project cost at Rs 170 crore today is two-and-a-half

times more than what it was when it was conceived three years ago. This is due to an increase in duties and the devaluation of the rupee. Says Kaura: "We will be forced to build up a high-cost glass shell factory with high prices of the product."

ET just a few years ago, the picture portrayed by the Government was rosy. It had estimated that the country would produce as many as 5.5 million black and white sets and two million colour sets by 1990-1991. And it had expected at least four lakh Indian VCRs in the same period.

Why didn't the anticipated boom take place? Says A.N. Seghal, chief executive officer of the Texla group of companies: "The foreign exchange crunch leading to restrictions in import of electronic items by 15 per cent, the 200 per cent margin money requirement and

taxation have played havoc with the electronics industry." Political instability due to the Mandal stir has affected production too. And there've been no eye-catching programmes on TV after Mahabharat. Moreover, the devaluation of the rupee has made imports more expensive.

Most crippling has been the Government's taxation policy. Since electronics are regarded as a luxury item, excise duty on colour sets has gone up by a whopping 280 per cent between 1982 and 1989. Even black and white television sets haven't been spared—duty on them has gone up by more than 65 per cent in the past seven years. Moreover, the new budget slapped a 17-per cent increase in duty on VCRs at one go. It didn't even spare the burgeoning audio cassettes industry, doubling the specific duty on tapes this year. And by equalising duties on all kind of colour sets with an ex-factory price of Rs 5,000 it knocked off the lower end of the market.

Ironically, the Government's stiff dose of taxes comes just when consumerism is spreading to rural areas and the lower income groups. And when electronic goods are no longer a luxury product. A study by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) points out that a major chunk of the electronic goods is being bought by the lower classes. For instance, 36 per cent of the small colour ry sets were sold to consumers with an annual household salary of below Rs 25,000. These consumers also took home 42 per cent of the two-in-ones in the country. Says S.L. Rao, director-general of NCAER: "There is a large market waiting to be tapped. The Government should cut taxes so it is affordable for these consumers.'

Some in the Government are realising the potential—belatedly though. They are urging companies to increase their domes-



"Developing countries get a duty preference. Devaluation has made exports attractive."

J.R. MULCHANDANI, *Bush India*



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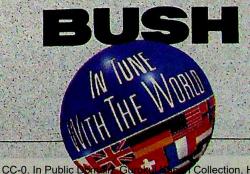
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tic base of production so that they can also tap the burgeoning export market. The Department of Electronics (DOE) is pushing through a range of proposals which include:

▶ Encouraging large-scale units to provide for economies of scale. DOE proposes licensing manufacturers to produce compact disc players, provided that for every dollar imported they can get back double the amount through exports. A host of players like Sonodyne have already put in proposals before the Government.

Luring foreign investors by setting up hardware technology parks where access to the internal market will be based on value addition on the product.

Pushing through a proposal to increase REP licenses on exports from 40 per cent to 60

▶ Encouraging large trading houses in the country to push electronic exports.

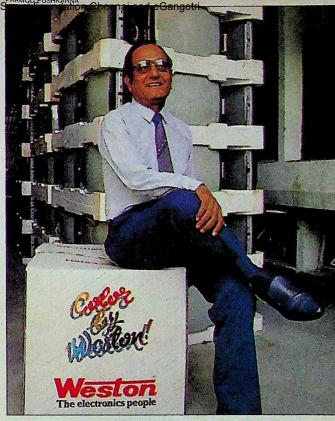
▶ Providing international quality control certificates for export in hard currency areas.

▶ Pushing through the commercialisation of the little-used frequency modulation technology for radios.

DOE has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the European Community for access to high definition television technology. It is also funding a project for the development of digital technology at a price of Rs 4 crore.

But all these incentives might not be enough for Indian companies to compete in the international market. For one, companies are making no effort to invest in technology—

itis even less than 1 per cent on turnover compared to the 7.5 per cent invested by Japanese giants like Matshushita. The result: the technology gap is widening. For example, while the world is shifting to either very small television sets or large jumbo screens based on liquid crystal technology, India is still stuck with outmoded



"Manufacturing your own components ensures control over quality and prices."

S.T. VACHANI, MD, Weston Electroniks

sizes. In addition, while high-definition televisions with improved picture quality are becoming popular abroad. India is still nowhere in the picture. Moreover, while there is a compact disc boom in the West, India is still way behind.

Though the odds are stacked against the electronics

industry, this should not deter the courageous. For, devaluation has made Indian electronics more competitive in the international market. Sums up N. Vittal, secretary of the DOE: "For years there has been an altruistic hostility to the consumer electronics sector. That must go. And we have to plug ourselves into the global market."

If they do that, the future for Indian electronics may not be so dismal.

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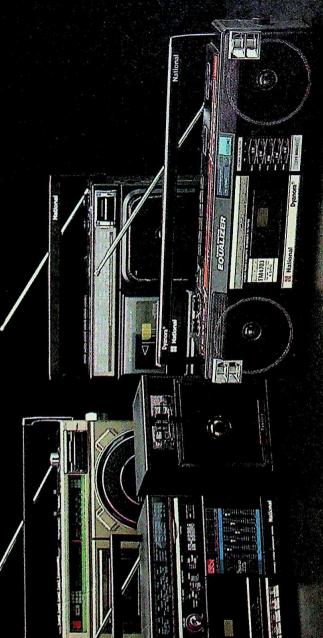
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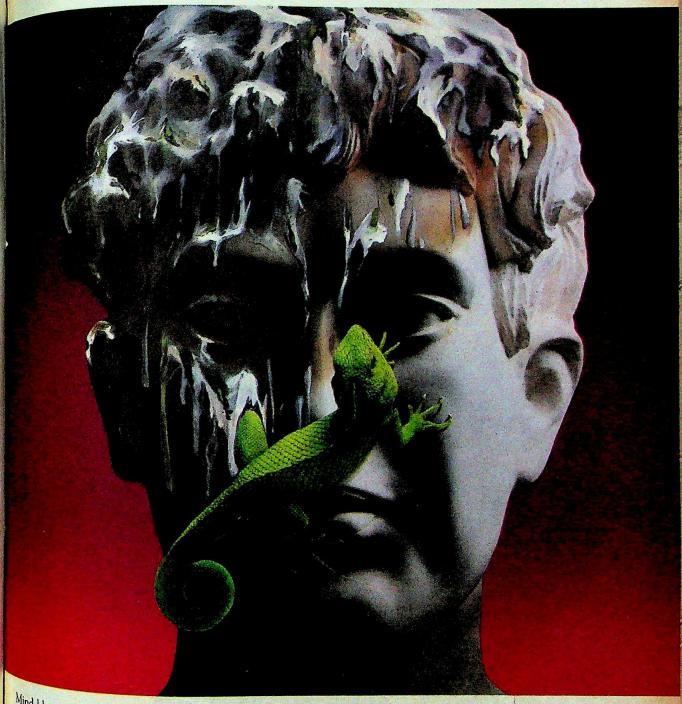
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GET YOUR HEAD CLEANED. AUTOMATICALLY.



Mind-blowing features like Auto Head Cleaning and Digital Tracking give you a clear picture of the ONIDA advantage in VCRs. Fast forward to your nearest dealer and see why all brands of TVs are falling head over heels for the ONIDA VCR.



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A CHANGING VIEW

As demand for TV sets dips, companies are looking at diversification

O keep afloat in the television industry, Prem T. Vachani, chairman of Rs 150-crore Weston Electroniks, is refashioning his strategy. No, he isn't getting out of electronics. He is diversifying into cordless telephones and movies. Consumers aren't lapping up colour TV sets so he's pegging his production at last year's level. And drumming up export orders in a growing black and white TV market.

Vachani isn't alone. Others are also rewriting their production and marketing strategies to grab a larger

share of the market. They are going in for slick models, tie-ups for hire-purchase schemes, and trying to corner the export market, in addition to hiking advertising budgets.

The figures are dismal. Monthly production of black and white TV sets, post-budget, has fallen by 40 per cent. And the industry fears that production of colour TV sets may fall to 0.8 million sets in 1991—a 33-per cent drop.

Says T.P.G. Nambiar, managing director of BPL India Ltd: "With margins under pressure, there's been a polarisation of brands. Leading companies are gaining market shares from weaker brands." Certainly, marketing strategies of the leaders like Videocon, Onida and BPL have paid off. Three years ago 12 companies controlled 50 per cent of the colour TV market. Today just four brands control 60 per cent. Many others are closing shop.

Survivors are trying hard to hold on to their turf. Says N. Gupta, vice-president of Videocon International Ltd: "Our strategy is to go in for volume and a big range of products." Large volumes allow the company to get discounts from vendors to reduce costs.

Some, like Onida, are concentrating on the higher end of the market. Though Onida has only six models, it is introducing new valueadded features to its products to lure buyers: a morning alarm system in colour TV sets, and screening the names of all the service stations of the company at the push of a button. All this, backed by a 15-per cent hike in the advertising budget this year.

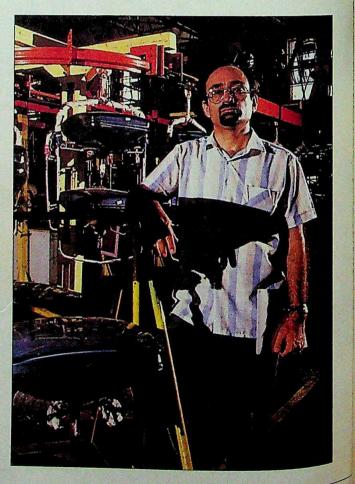
Also jumping into the up-market game is the Pune-based Kalyani Sharp, the makers of Optonica television. Along with detachable speakers in TV sets, it has also introduced a blue-black system where the screen automatically switches off at the end of transmission.

Growing competition is forcing all companies to expand their market. Texla drew a blank when it introduced grey and black cabinets for its black and white TV sets in rural areas. Its new range is in bright red and yellow which the farmers are lapping up. But Optonica is positioning its slick black and white portables as a second TV set for richer urbanites. Stateowned Uptron has begun a scheme to exchange old black and white sets for a new TV at a discount.

Manufacturers are also strengthening their distribution channels. Onida is increasing its retail outlets by 30 per cent this year. And Ceat's electronic division doubled its dealer network over the past year and a half.

SATISH KAURA, MD and chairman, SCL

"If no further relief comes in. tube manufacturers might come to a grinding halt."



BPL C

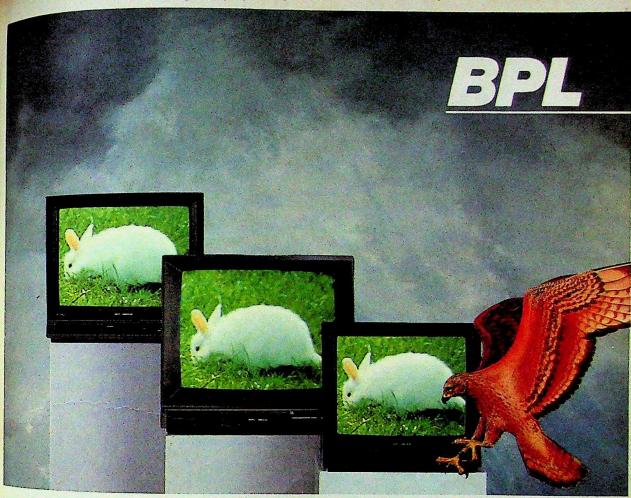
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BPL Colour Televisions. The pride of millions in India. Now exported to Britain. And even awarded the Best TV' in Britain by the prestigious 'What Video' magazine. After gaining approval from the British Testhouse for compliance with British standards. BPL is the only Indian Company to have exported over 25,000 sets to Britain, in just a few months. Today BPL is all set to double this export sale from 5,000 to 10,000 per month.

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Portable Gensets in just over 3½ years. Shriram Honda's quality, efficient service and nationwide network have helped to achieve our commitment towards customer satisfaction. Our gensets are also fast gaining popularity in markets abroad and are presently sold in 11 countries worldwide.

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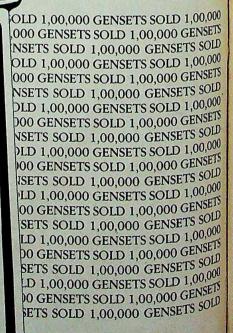
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us reach this milestone.

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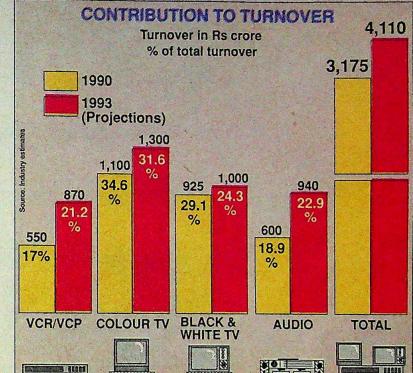
Shriram Honda Power Equipment Ltd., Kirti Mahal, 5th Floor, 19, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110 008 Ph: 5739103-04-05. FAX: 91-11-585835 CC-0.

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With product differentiation getting blurred, one way of scoring over others is with better after-sales service. So BPL has setup a separate company for it. Its service centres have 24-hour answering machines and sevendays-a-week service. Philips is also beefing up its after-sales service network. It now has a franchise chain of 78 dealers.

As margins reduce, cutting costs is essential. So most companies manufacture their own components. Says S.T. Vachani, managing director of Weston Electroniks: "It ensures control overquality and assures you the right prices in case of a shortage. Itreduces our costs. And components have their own market.' Weston manufactures its own printed circuit boards. BPL has invested Rs 20 crore on its injection moulding plant.

But then it's not smooth sailing for every one and many find innovative ways to survive. Televista, a pioneer in the industry, is diversifying into audio systems. Laments Vipin Luthra, chairman of Televista Electronics: "We suffered from our past legacy. Due to the policy of self-reliance, the breakdown ratio of black and white sets was high. When colour came in we had a credibility problem which the new players did not."

The state-owned ET&T hasn't been able to sell colour set kits to small-scale entrepreneurs who can't compete with established brands. Uptron is trying to change its image of a cheap but low-tech product—one reason why it lost out in the colour TV market—and has upped its advertising budget by 20 per cent this year to Rs 3 crore.

However, there is good news on the export front.

Bush India has earmarked 60 per cent of its capacity for exports. The company has recently bagged orders to sell 50,000 colour TV sets to the UK. Says J.R. Mulchandani, marketing director of the company: "With high volumes as a result of exports we can negotiate better prices with our vendors and cut costs. Also, developing countries get a 15-per cent duty preference in western countries. Surely devaluation has made exports attractive.'

Without doubt: a colour TV, hawked for \$140 before devaluation, now sells for \$132, BPL, which developed a colour TV model called Zenor for the UK, sold 25,000 sets last year. Weston is scanning the African, Mid-eastern and European markets for its black and white TV sets.

With the local TV market in a shambles, perhaps the best bet for companies is to look outwards.

THE SOUND OF MONEY

The audio business is booming as new players move in with a wider range

HE Rs 700-crore Indian audio industry is heading for the big time. After years of taking the back seat to televisions, it is finally coming into its own.

Suddenly, television manufacturers like Onida, Televista and Videocon are diversifying into the audio business. Pearful of being edged out, old players like Philips are revving up their marketing strategies to protect their turf. And a host of small-scale units is making their move in rural areas.

The game is to grab as large a chunk of the growing

market as possible. Market leader Philips is shaking itself after years of complacency. Points out Manohar David, director and senior vice-president of the company's consumer electronics division: "We're going in for high volume growth, innovation in range and a cut in prices. We're taking competition very seriously."

No doubt they are. The company plans to increase its turnover from audios by 45 per cent this year. To win over the youth, Philips has come up with an array of models in unsual shapes and attractive colours and features like auto-reverse and high-speed dubbing.

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The Art of Entertainment

Stylish and Compact

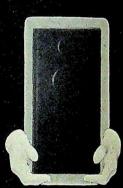
In today's active society, a compact and modular Hi-Fi component stereo system is the perfect answer to home entertainment. The Contempo series gives you all you could ask for in both convenience and sound quality, as well as a stylish design that complements your living space.



Contempo Hi-Fi Compact System







In spite of its compact design, Contempn is pack ed with a variety of high-tech features that produce high-quality sound in almost any listening, pace. Contempo's specially engineered function is seen seen seen seen seen seen as a contempo's specially engineered function is compensate for the loss of sund presence in a imited spaces. As a result, Contempo sound is crisp and clear, no matter where you are in the room. What's more, Pioneer Smart Operation capabilities make the Contempo sound is crisp and clear, no matter where you are in the room. What's more, Pioneer Smart Operation apabilities make the Contempo unded will suit almost any taste with a choice of Single, I win and Multi-play CD expabilities. And all of the Contempo models employ 1-Bit DIC (Direct Linear Conversion) technology for extremely high-quality sound. Add to this an ASIS (Auto Synthronized Iditing Systems provided on 1 the Double Auto-Reverse Cassette Deck that all elss you program Contempo to automatically create professional-sounding cossett erroudings. All of this makes Contempo is packed with a variety of high-tech features that produce high-quality sound in almost any listening space. Contempo specially engineered functions compensate for the loss of sound presence in limited spaces. As a result, Contempo sound is crisp and clear, no matter where you are in the room. What's more, Pioneer Smart Operation capabilities make the C

ontempo system simple to use. A touch of the START/SET button and the system delivers quality his fround. Various Contempo models will suit almost any taste with a choice of Single, Iwin and Multi-play CD capabilities. And all of the Contempo to an observation technology for enter the contempo to a touch the Double Auto-Reverse Casse the Deck that lets you proof an Contempo to automatically creat professional-sounding cassette recordings. All of this makes Contempo the ideal personal entertainment system. In spite of its compact design, Contempo or is packed with a variet y of high-tech features that produce high-quality sound in almost any listening space. Contempor's specially engineered functions compensate for the loss of sound presence in limited spaces. As a result, Contempo yound is viray an result. Contempo yound is viray an result. Contempo yound is viray and result of the properties of the propered of the properties of the properties of the properties of the p

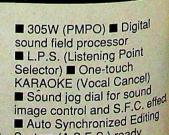
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System (A.S.E.S.) ready

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*X-P55/X-P55M (305W PMPO), X-P33 (210W PMPO) and X-P11 (200W PMPO) Contempo models are also available.

Every day, as 40 million homes enjoy TV programmes, it's ECIL technology at work.

Helping beam TV signals from earth to satellite and back.

It's this technology that comes to your home in the form of the most modern breed of colour televisions.

EC TV Legend.

The only TV that offers the option of being used as a colour monitor for personal computers.

TVs that give you multisystem options to watch both PAL/SECAM programmes.

TVs that let you record programmes on a VCP with recording facility.

TVs that can be programmed to 'sleep' or display programme status.

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TVs that work on voltages as low as 90 volts and as high as 290 volts.

The distance between us and the competition is about 35,887 kms towards space.

ECIL technology helps beam TV signals from earth to satellite and back, helping over 40 million homes in India enjoy TV programmes.

> TVs with advanced features like Full Square Tube; On-screen Display; Full Auto Search; Full Function Remote...

EC TV Legend. Walk across to your nearest EC TV showroom or EC TV dealer for a demonstration.

You'll see what it means to be 35,887 kms ahead of competition!

EC TV LEGEND

Experience the technology that helps India watch TV

ECTV is available in a wide range of colour and black & white models, at reasonable prices. Electronics Corporation of India Ltd. (A Govt. of India-Dept. of Atomic Energy-Enterprise) Hyderabad - 500 762, CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

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Apart from improving its aftersales service, Philips is also wooing customers through the "Smart Buy Offer". It has already tied up with more than 50 companies for this scheme under which the company employees can buy their wares in instalments. Apart from selling its audio range through direct mailers-offering free gifts as an incentive-it's also selling directly to the Government and hotels.

Expectedly, the new players are giving the market leaders a

run for their money. Televista hopes to take advantage of its large distribution network, which it has built up for hawking televisions, to sell its audio products too. Videocon is all-set to introduce a stereo-radio recorder for an affordable Rs 1.300 and a two-in-one without recording facility reasonably priced at Rs 700. Even

	IARKET SH (1989-90)	IARE
	RADIO/ TRANSISTOR	TWO-IN-ONE, MONO/STEREO & CASSETTE RECORDERS
Phillips	36,43%	25,65%
National	4.00%	21.71%
Bush	9,37%	7.65%
Murphy	7.98%	5.30%
Santosh	5,26%	,
BPL	•	3.14%
Sou	rce: NCAER. Based on sur purchases in 500,000 hou	vey of actual seholds

Onida, which traditionally targets the higher end of the market, is making a bid for the rural sector where it plans to introduce a jumbo audio system. Recently, it introduced a hi-fi system with a 10-band equaliser and improved accoustics for the middle class buyer.

And that's not all. The Bombay-based Cosmic Radios, apart from introducing a new echo device in its hi-fi systems, builds systems custom-made to suit individual tastes and preferences. It is also introducing a high-

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speed cassette recorder, a professional-grade cassette duplicator and high-powered amplifiers of 300 watts.

Many companies are busy paring costs while ensuring quality. For example, in order to reduce overheads Bush India is farming out manufacturing to small-scale vendors and getting its components from countries

where costs are lower. And BPL is manufacturing its own tape-deck mechanism, plastic parts and cabinets.

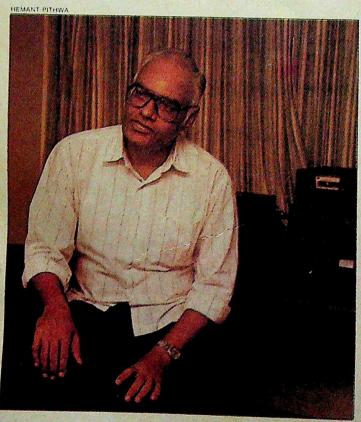
Not that the small-scale units are sitting pretty. Instead, they are improving quality and after-sales services. Although their share in the audio market has fallen from 90 per cent to 60 per cent over the past five years, they still enjoy certain advantages: a 10-percent excise duty concession, exemption up to a turnover of Rs 75 lakh, lower overheads and low marketing costs. They are stepping on ground the big boys wouldn't dare to tread due to low margins. Like portable cassette players. Last year the small-scale units sold 2 lakh sets and the market is expected to grow by 50 per cent this year. The small-scale units are also negotiating with the Government for licences to import components for FM radio systems.

Not surprisingly, the cassette manufacturers are raking it in. From a mere Rs 40 crore in 1980 the industry has crossed the Rs 500-crore mark in a decade, selling 180 million cassettes annually. Cashing in on the popularity of musical films, Super Cassettes Industries Ltd has set up a music bank of songs. Also, aware of the growing competition from pirated copies, market leader HMV introduced economy cassettes a few years ago. Today 75 per cent of its sales comes from this sector. And Magnasound has carved out a niche in the western music sector.

Audio manufacturers are, clearly, having a field day.

RAMESH MANIK, Cosmic Radios

"We are going to introduce a new echo device in our custommade hi-fi systems."



SOFTWARE EXPORTS

No Easy Way

Though export prospects are bright, Indian entrepreneurs have to change their products and marketing styles to keep up with the competition.

By ALOK TIWARI

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THE figures look impressive on paper. Indian software exports are slated to jump from Rs 250 crore in 1990-91 to over Rs 450 crore this year. And by mid-1995, multiply five times. That amounts to \$1 billion worth of exports, the magic figure that the industry has been aiming at for the past decade.

However, approaching it another way, the figures look ridiculous. At present, India accounts for less than one-tenth of 1 per cent of the global \$128-billion-a-year computer software market. Assuming Indian exports cross the billion-dollar barrier and keep growing, by the end of the century they would still account for a measly half per cent of the global business. If it is to get anywhere in the business, India needs to give that growth a desperate push. "It's not a question of whether we do a billiondollar export in five years," says Saurabh Srivastava, chairman, Computer Software Export Promotion Council. "We either do it quickly or we will have trouble doing it at all."

In a bid to aid that quick-stepping, the Government has recently granted some concessions. Delicensing of the industry is the most important one, besides liberalising import of capital goods, 100 per cent ownership by foreign companies for export-oriented units, and complete income tax exemption on export earnings. The industry can also buy Exim scrips at 30 per cent of export value instead of 10 per cent before July. The Technology Development and Information Company of India Limited has been set up to provide venture capital funding to software entrepreneurs. A privately-run finance company, Bombay-based Creditcapital Venture Fund (India) Limited, is soon going to provide the service. Says N. Vittal, secretary, Department of Electronics: "I hope the industry realises what an opportunity it has."

It does, but the list of problems and trends shows that it will take a lot to beat the odds. For starters, India still remains a supplier of software services. Almost 80 per cent of export revenue comes from on-site services where a company designs and develops custom-made software packages at the client's premises abroad. This is definitely a step ahead from the time, not too long ago, when all an Indian 'software' organisation did was recruit software technicians to fill company ranks abroad for a fee, a term known as 'body shopping' in the trade. "Now we are past that stage," says Pawan Kumar, deputy general manager, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), India's top software exporter. Still, the trend is skewed. Because, while India concentrates on exporting serviceswhich involves the expensive proposition of supporting a team in a foreign

Chart by PRANAB DUTTA & BK SHARMA SOFTWARE EXPORT GROWTH **Estimates** Rs 2,600 crore (1994-95)*Rs 1,682 crore (1993-94) *Rs 250 crore Rs 1,147 crore (1990-91)(1992-93)* Rs 450 crore (1991-92) * The \$1 billion target by 1995 is impressive and could double by the year 2000. But unless India tries even harder, it could be left behind in the global marketplace. For instance, \$2 billion would be just over half a per cent of the pie.

country-the world is concentrating on providing packaged software which can be sold to any customer. Currently, packaged software is estimated at just 1 per cent of India's total exports.

OR the industry, the direction to take is clear: cut back on services and develop packages. Specially as competition increases in the international software market, India will find that its cheap manpower costs—a prime reason for making Indian service exports attractive-are under attack by others who have recently entered the game-China, Latin America, Eastern Europe, the Philippines and even Bangladesh. There has been some movement on the software packaging front, but the industry is hamstrung because of its structure. Besides, India simply doesn't have the infrastructure to handle the shift and at the same time move into the software big league.

For example, there is the problem with communications. Here, it is a point of both too expensive and too little. It's practically mandatory to have a highspeed satellite link both for transmitting packages and keeping in touch with clients abroad. Only one company, USbased Texas Instruments, has set up a

FRESH INCENTIVES

- The Government has delicensed the industry.
- Capital goods imports have been liberalised.
- 100 per cent ownership allowed for foreign companies promoting export-oriented units.
- Complete income tax exemption on all company earnings made from exports.
- The Technology Development and Information Company of India set up to provide venture capital to software units. A private company will soon follow suit.

high-speed link near Bangalore at a cost of \$2 million, more than the turnover of many Indian companies put together. The Department of Telecommunications offers a slower link, but the Rs 10lakh a year it charges for the facility from each customer is prohibitive for most of them-out of India's 700-odd software companies, 550 have an annual turnover below Rs 10 lakh.

Even for companies with financial clout, the equations of pushing a product abroad are expensive. For instance

says Veer Sagar, chief executive of DCM Data Products, "the marketing costs of a package in the US can be more than 40 per cent of the list price". And companies fight shy of investing in marketing packages, where there is no guarantee of success. This, combined with want of marketing expertise and infrastructure to penetrate a competitive market, is a surefire recipe for wiping out weaklings. Tata Unisys' Ravinder Khanna puts it



Each Kaaleen carpet carries a warranty for two years, Kaaleen carpets are available at the following outlets, AHMEDABAD: Kaaleen, Ph: 447101, AMRITSAR: Lucky Variety Emportum, Ph. 31.45
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PERSISTING PROBLEMS

- India is mostly a supplier of software services, but the world is switching to packaged software.
- High-speed satellite links for transmitting packages and messages abroad are both too few and too expensive.
- Though India has over 700 software companies, most are too small to effectively market their products abroad.
- The domestic software base is not big enough yet to support a massive export push.
- A manpower problem is expected in the next five years.

rather bluntly: "If you lower the risks, you lower the returns." The government thinking is that given the foreign exchange constraints, Indian companies should develop strategic links with foreign firms for marketing their products. This has happened, but not to the extent that is required.

There is another problem. Many in the industry feel India's domestic base is 100 small for it to become a significant exporter. Domestic software sales were

estimated at Rs 180 crore in 1989-90. The figure doubled in 1990-91, but is not expected to keep pace with the growth in exports. The rationale is that establishing a large domestic market is crucial for both developing awareness and trying out technology. "What you sell abroad is linked to what you do at home," says R.N. Basu, vice-president, system and software, with public sector CMC Limited. "You cannot afford to make mistakes in the international market.'

and eGangotri Constraints apart, the industry has started getting into gear. TCS has set up development facilities in Madras and Bombay, while Digital Equipment India Limited, a top exporter and an associated company of Digital Equipment Corporation of the US, is beefing up its software export centre. DCM Data is implementing a \$4.5 million order for development of a transport information system for Allied Van Lines of the US, the biggest order till now to be executed entirely in India.

There is also a move into packaged software. WIPRO Systems is marketing a project management package called Instaplan. Tata Unisys has developed a signature verification software, Signbank, for banks, while TCS has entered the global market with its project monitoring package, PRISM, and has just unveiled a financial package called E.X. Oberoi Software, a division of East India Hotels Limited which runs the Oberoi chain of hotels, is hawking a hotel management package.

The export game is on. But just to keep up with the competition, Indian software exporters will probably have to work harder than they ever did. Billiondollar targets are easy to talk about, but infinitely more difficult to reach.

HPersian carpet for just Rs.1,100. Is that what makes Shyam Ahuja turn pale?

Deep files a burst of colour in a pale, geometric and abstract world. Vibrant greens. Deep blues. Magical maroons. Captured forever in a Kaaleen carpet. Over 50 designs I inspired by the age-old splendour of Persia and Kashmir. Made of the silkiest jute fibres 2. fibres. At prices that, of course, don't shout. (A 4'6"x6'6" rug costs, say, Rs. 1,120.)

In fact, the entire range (2'x4' to 9'x12') of Kaaleen carpets is priced between (whisper, whisper) Rs. 250 ¹⁰ Rs. 4,700 only. So walk into the nearest Kaaleen carpet showroom. And make Shyam Ahuja see red.

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WITHIN MALAYSIA

STAY WHERE YOU ARE

HERE had been a very strong rumour in Ministry of Finance (MOF) circles that S.S. Nadkarni, currently chairman, Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) was tipped to take over as governor of the RBI. And S. Venkitaramanan, the present governor, would move to Delhi as super-bureaucrat in the MOF to oversee the liberalisation and liaise with international funding agencies. If this happened, then Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India Chairman N. Vaghul would either move to the RBI or take over IDBI. Now it appears that Finance Minister Manmohan Singh has scuttled any such moves, beginning with Nadkarni's. Even if Venkitaramanan moves to Delhi-observers give it an even chance—Singh has made it very clear, say ministry officials, that the others will stay where they are.

MAFATLAL'S MOVES

UBEGAVAS

THE Mafatlal group is on an expansion spree. For one, group company Polyolefins Industries Limited is proposing to set up a 6,000-tonne per annum rubber chemicals and 5,000 tonnes per annum intermediaries plant in Bharuch district of Gujarat at an estimated cost of Rs 98.5 crore. The plan initially met with slight resistance from the All India Small-Scale Silica Manufacturers Association which feared that the company might also manufacture precipitated silica—used by the rubber industry—an item reserved for the small-scale sector. This has been resolved with the company's assurance against any such move. Simultaneously, there are plans to expand operations at another unit. Navin Fluorine Industries in Surat district of Gujarat, at an estimated cost of Rs 9.2 crore.

THAWING OUT

T is a little over a year since Chhabria group company Mather Derby (India) Limited, to make refrigerators, deep freezers and compressors, was incorporated. And finally, things seem to be moving. An approval for Rs 13 crore worth of capital goods imports has been given in principle—company officials say they expect a formal okay any day now. However, there is no firm estimate on when the project will get going or when the products will hit the market. What company officials do know is that deep freezers—largely manufactured by the unorganised sector—will be the first item, followed by refrigerators.

TELL ME WHY

Supreme Court directive asking Raymonds Synthetics to deposit Rs 2.6 crore over non-refund of interest to its October 1990 share issue has perked up the Department of Company Affairs. The department has now decided to launch prosecution against any company that delays refunds and interest payments. At the top of their list is UB Petrochemicals, which held a Rs 10-crore public issue issue—oversubscribed 40 times—in 1989. While allotment was finalised on November 27, 1989, despatches to four lakh unsuccessful applicants were completed by end-December. The remaining five lakh received refund orders in the c in the first week of January. But the department says the process should have been done by December 5, and these applicants should now be paid interest ranging from 4 to 15 Per cent per annum depending on the delay. A show cause notice has already been despatched to UB Petrochemicals.

CALLING ALL LENDERS

report that Citibank had pulled out \$230 million of Indian credit earlier this year, did jolt India-watchers in early September. While that is Charley BK. SHARMA

worrisome, India's creditworthiness may not take a beating till other

banks start calling in their loans. And a key factor in this

game are banks which arrange commercial loans for India, other than Citibank. Once they stop organising funds for the country, India is in trouble. In fact, Citibank, though a major name worldwide, doesn't figure in the list of major loan arrangers. ANZ Grindlays tops the chart, followed by the Industrial Bank of Japan, Banque Paribas, Banque National de Paris, the Sanwa Bank of Japan and The Bank of Tokyo. For the moment, the biggles are hanging

\$ 500 **ANZ Grindlays** Industrial Bank \$ 327.2 of Japan **Banque Paribas** \$315.8 **Banque Nationale** \$315.8 de Paris Sanwa Bank \$ 279.2 Bank of Tokyo \$ 218.6 Istituto Bancario San Paulo di Torino \$ 150 State Bank of India \$ 118.9 **Barclays Bank** s 116.7 Nippon Credit Bank § 100 Source: Euromoney Loanware

TOP ARRANGERS

FINANCE FOR INDIA

in \$ million (1990)

on. The situation may change next month if US credit rating agency Standard & Poors further downgrades India.

PHARMACEUTICAL PLANS

ANBAXY Laboratories Limited plans to further diversify its activities in the pharmaceutical sector. The company will be setting up a new factory at Noida in Ghaziabad district to manufacture 28 life-saving drug formulations at an estimated cost of Rs 36 crore. The Noida plant would also manufacture diagnostic kits, formulations of amoxycillin trihydrate and cloxacillin sodium besides formulations of bulk drug mebendazole at an additional cost of Rs 2.7 crore. The company's expansion plans include raising the production capacity of its capsules based on ginseng extracts, vitamins and minerals from 425 kg a year to 3,400 kg at its Dewas plant in Madhya Pradesh. This will cost the company Rs 200 lakh. Ranbaxy has also obtained sanction from the Government to expand its production line—under a broad-banding scheme—at its SAS Nagar plant in Ropar district of Punjab.

PRICES

The Rising Tide

Persistent inflation presents a bleak scenario

"THE Government continues to attach the highest priority to bringing down the rate of inflation.

-Finance Minister Manmohan Singh

T doesn't seem to help much. The finance minister's prediction of a 9per cent rate of inflation over the year is already shattered, with the official wholesale price index registering 15.6 per cent in the first week of September. And economists are al-

the rate of inflation nudges the rate of devaluation, the rupee may have to be devalued further to keep exports competitive. Says Sudipto Mundle, senior fellow at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy: "This could imply a price spiral from which it could be difficult to get out."

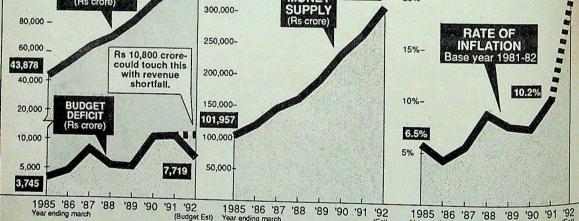
Government action is crucial to

THE RUINOUS ROAD

prices, railway freight charges and fertiliser have added another 0.4 per cent each. Excise duty increases have contributed 0.6 per cent and a rise in procurement prices for agricultural produce, 1.5 per cent.

Didn't the Government take these factors into account when it declared—weeks after the devaluation that inflation would remain at 9 per cent? Finance Ministry officials discount the inflation. First, they say, the current 15 per cent-plus inflation is artificial because it compares postbudget prices this year against a period in 1990 when the slack season had set in. After every budget there is a spurtin prices, and as the budget was presented on schedule last year, by September 1990 the inflation rate had evened out.

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE SHORTFALLS COULD INCREASE THE BUDGET DEFICIT... ... LEADING TO A FURTHER GROWTH IN MONEY SUPPLY OF OVER 17% THIS YEAR... ... WHICH WILL ONLY PUSH UP INFLATION FURTHER TO 20% FOR THE YEAR. 113,422 GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE (Rs crore) 308,800 100,000 20%-300,000-



ready talking about inflation levels touching 20 per cent before the yearend. Says Isher J. Ahluwalia, research professor at the Centre for Policy Research: "Unless we realise we are in a state of economic emergency, we can't even begin to solve the problem."

Source: Budget 1991-92, Economic Survey 1990-91, CMIE, NCAER, estimates

The present inflation is specially worrisome. "High inflation was usually related to drought," says R.N. Malhotra, former RBI governor. "Now we have high inflation despite three successive good monsoons." Besides, rising prices are likely to play havoc with the new economic policy package. It could negate the July devaluation of the rupee by an average of 20 per cent against major currencies, designed to give a boost to exports. And if

Kising prices are likely to play havoc with the Government's new economic policy.

prevent this from happening. Unfortunately, till now, all recent measures have only fuelled inflation. For example, according to the National Council for Applied Economic Research, the July devaluation alone has contributed 1.9 to 2.2 per cent to the inflation. The consequent hike in petroleum

But this year, the budget was behind schedule, so the effects are still being felt. In a couple of months, say ministry analysts, the rate of inflation should drop, once the kharif crop comes in. This, however, is not enough reason to keep calm, because government expenditure as presented in the budget usually exceeds estimates. This, in turn, adds to the deficit, which the Government finances by the simple expedient of printing more money which further adds to inflation.

and

For example, in 1990-91, interest payments exceeded the budget estlmates by Rs 1,000 crore. Subsidy on fertilisers crossed estimates by Rs 400 crore, and loans to states and Union territories jumped estimates by Rs 900 Mayour so rare, it's shared amongst barely 1% of mankind.

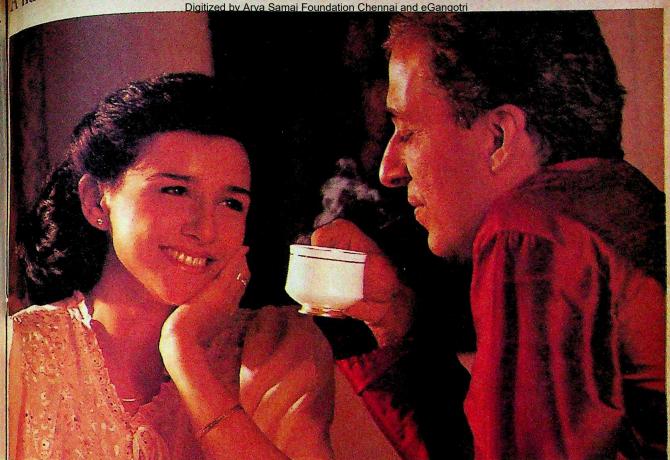
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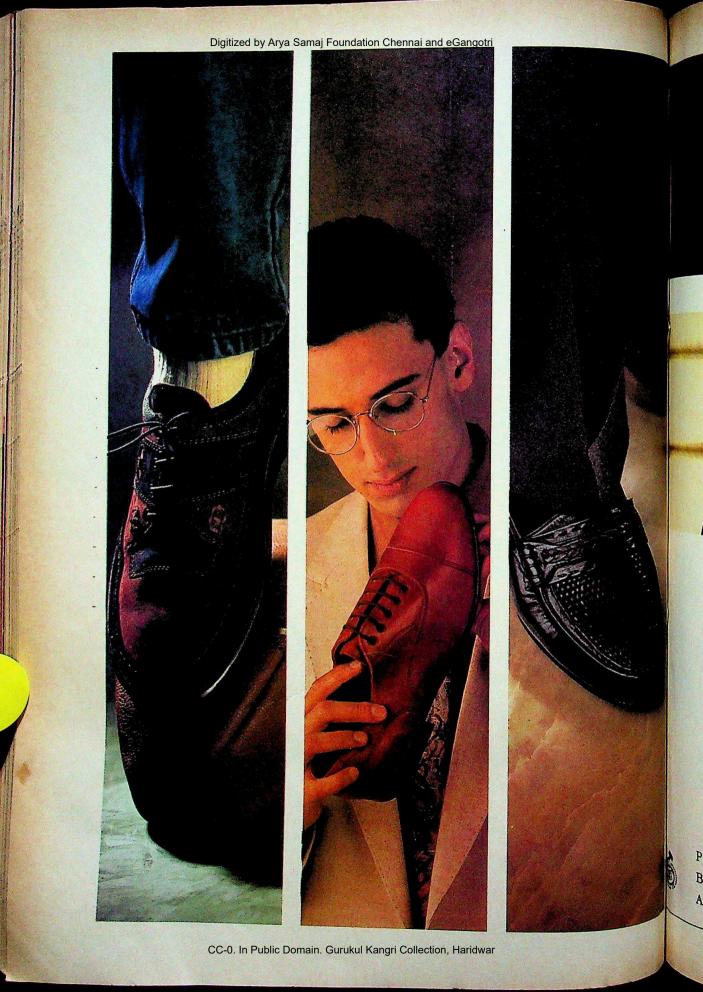
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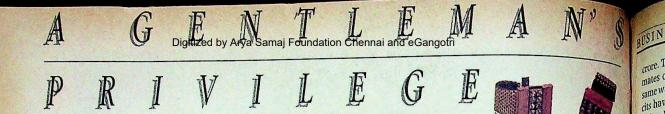






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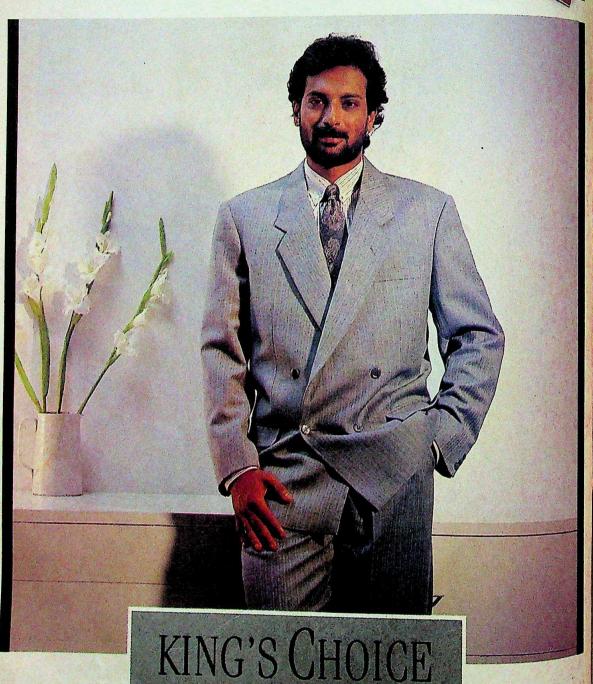
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rore The 1991-92 budget deficit estimates of Rs 7.719 crore could go the same way. "Traditionally, budget defidishave outstripped estimates," says Pulin Nayak, reader at the Delhi School of Economics. "I see no reason why Manmohan Singh should be able to contain this one.

More problems. This year, with the RBI's import curbs still in force, the shortfall from customs duties could be anything between Rs 1.500 crore and projections. This, at a time when the best thing the Government can do is reduce the public sector burden.

Even the industrial policy hasn't moved full throttle. There is no news yet of an exit policy for industries, which would allow business to open shop and shut down if it gets unproductive. The proposed scrapping of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act. which will unshackle industry, has not come about. There is FOREIGN LOANS

Just in Time

India secures financial aid

HE relief is palpable. Last month. Finance Ministry mandarins pulled off two much-needed agreements to shore up India's foreign exchange reserves.

On September 12, the IMF approved a \$635-million (about Rs 1,650 crore) loan to India under its compensatory and contingency financing facility (CCFF). Another \$2.2 billion in standby credit is expected beginning October this year.

And on September 19, the Aid India Consortium—a group representing industrialised nations-met in Paris. The takeout from this meeting was even more welcome: \$6.7 billion worth of aid for 1991-92, and close to onethird of the amount in fast-disbursing

THE NEW LOANS

- The IMF has sanctioned a million contingency \$635 loan-this will help pay loans and interest due in October.
- The agency has also agreed to provide \$2.2 billion in stand-by credit, with instalments beginning October.
- The Aid India Consortium has agreed to provide \$6.7 billion of aid for 1991-92mostly for low-interest and long-term repayment.
- The World Bank is likely to sanction between \$3-4 billion in 1991-92-this will be tied to specific projects in India.

aid, which will be available within a couple of months.

There is also an indication that the World Bank may sanction anything between \$3 billion and \$4 billion during the current financial year, though these are tied to specific projects in India and not used for paying creditors.

The funds, specially the CCFF, have come just in time for the country. Says a senior Central Government minister: "It will be used to pay back loans and interest payments that fall due in October." Most of this constitutes payment for short-term loans that the Government has rolling over or, re-

COMPONENTS OF THE CURRENT 15.6% INFLATION

Impact of increase in fertiliser price... 0.4%

Impact of increase in railway freight... 0.4% Impact of increase in petroleum price... 0.4% Source: NCAER, estimates

Impact of increase in excise duties... 0.6%

Impact of increase in procurement prices... 1.5%

Impact of devaluation which increased prices of vital imported inputs... 2.1%

Last year's inflation rate of 10.2% was itself an increase over the annual increase of 7% over the 80s. This was primarily due to increase in costs following the Gulf crisis, and industrial dislocations which resulted from agitations all over the country...10.2%

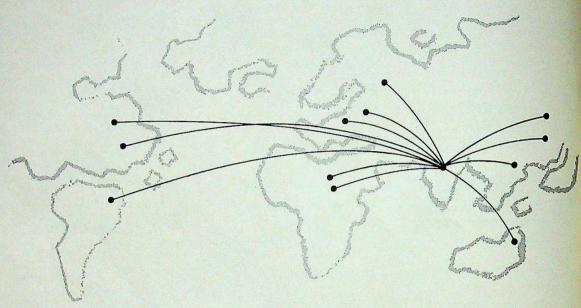
Rs 2,000 crore according to private estimates. Similarly, excise duty collections could see a shortfall of about Rs1,000 crore, as industrial growth has slowed down. Government's plan to sell off Rs 2,500 gore of public sector equity—to fur-

therreduce its deficit—is a non-starter. Since a boost in production is criticalin controlling inflation—increased Supplies lead to a drop in prices—it is imperative that the Government folow through with structural changes hatthe World Bank and IMF have been Siggesting for the past two years. A beginning has been made with the hade and industrial policies but the Government has, till now, avoided laking action in other areas. The public script, for example, Investment in this area Which has returned less than 3 percent on Rs 1,00,000 crore spent on now is actually expected to increase, according to the eighth plan

no move yet to amend labour laws to free industry from often-militant labour unions. And finally, the cost of commercial money is still too high which hampers industrial growth. So. at a time when industry should be reducing inflation, it is adding to it.

Right now, things don't look good, and the Government may be forced to take extreme steps. "If the inflationary trend is not reversed," says Malhotra. "the finance minister will have to consider using other polices such as a freeze on wages as in 1974.

The fall-out may be more than the Government can handle. As of now, it is banking on two factors. First, that its measures to reduce deficit—and hence money supply-would help bring down prices now that the Finance Bill has been passed. And that come October, the kharif crop will bring inflation down. However, not too many people are betting on it. SUNIL JAIN



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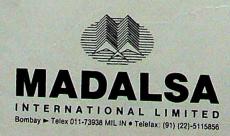
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A New Drive

Space for sale on cabs

HEN Bombay-based Virgin Mass Media decided to take to the streets, 3,000 people grabbed the opportunity. Cab Advertising, a Virgin subsidiary, told Bombay's space-hungry advertisers that it could put its sales pitch on and inside a cab for a small price. Just Rs 4,200 per taxi per year, for booking 200-500 cabs, and Rs 3,800 for booking 500 and above. For that, a buyer gets to place advertisements on two sides of the overhead carrier, the passenger doors and the back of the front

the repayment period. Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri
10 minutes on an average inside a cab-with no hope whatsoever of turning off the message as on TV. Add to this the fact that, theoretically, advertisements on the outside could be seen by a large chunk of Bombay's 1.2 crore population. "While the outside of the cab can be used to flash a brief message," says Vohra, "the inside can be used to impart hard product information." The plan is to move on to autorickshaws once cabs are cornered.

> But for Cab Advertising, which has an agreement for exclusive rights for taxis with the Bombay Taximen's Union (BTU), it may not be a smooth ride all the way to the bank. Already, some cab owners have begun to resent the fact that they are paid a rental of a mere Rs 1,200 a year per taxi. The figure, they feel, should be more like



Nagree and Vohra with an ad cab

seat, facing passengers. Amina Nagree and Farhana Vohra, the duo which runs both Virgin and Cab, are not regretting the move.

Already, 3,000 cabs have been booked by Philips India, Godrej and Castrol. Kelvinator, Tata Oil Mills Company and Hindustan Lever Limited, among others, have shown interest in the offer. Says Vohra, a director with the company: "By year-end, we would have hopefully sold space on all 35,000 cabs in the city.'

Mainly because it's an attractive proposition. Statistics show that a single cab is used by 40,000 people each year. This means that an advertiser investing roughly Rs 9 lakh on 200 cabs over a year can expect to reach a captive audience of 80 lakh. And this audience remains captive for at least Rs 2,000. But A.L. Quadros, secretary of the BTU, is willing to give the scheme a chance. "We agreed to the rate to ensurethesuccess of the idea," he says.

However, there could be other areas of resistance. For instance, a few Sunni Muslim taxi owners-in all, they number roughly 2,000-are reluctant to display advertisements in case they feature women and film stars. Another problem: a cab driver, whose vehicle advertises Godrej refrigerators isn't too happy. "The number of fares I carry has dropped," he says. "Everyone thinks I am an agent for Godrej and not for hire.'

Cab Advertising will have to sort these problems out, if it doesn't want the scheme to flop like an earlier effort had, in 1971. Meanwhile, Bombaywallas are literally being driven crazy by this unique medium.

-ARUN KATIYAR

ind the quick-disbursing aid, he says, bolster the foreign exchange regerves position—at a dismal Rs 2,995 core in mid-August—and pay for esential imports. There is a proposal to go in for fresh imports of edible oil and pulses—to contain a shortfall and hopefully, prices—which could cost the country Rs 2.000 crore this year. The money would help. But more importantly, the loan

packages would send out a message to the world that India is not broke—for the moment. This will also serve a ducial purpose: India can use the aid decisions as collateral to approach ommercial banks to garner new bans, at a time when commercial medit for India is difficult to come by. Or, reschedule the dates for repayment of existing loans. "Essentially," says N.K. Rakshit, professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, "there will be swapping of short-term debt with long-term debt.

However, this is a case of buying time, for a debt burden that is currently at \$71 billion. Besides, it can't be done with all of India's short-term debt. about \$12 billion of which—including NRIdeposits—falls due within the next 12 months. What India has to focus on is to try and ensure that it increasingly receives long-term concessional aid. Such as that received through the World Bank, individual countries or country consortiums such as Aid India, which are cheaper to service han short-term, high-interest loans. And the payback period could be as much as 20 years.

This kind of debt. admit government officials, is easier to take on than short-term commercial borrowings. because in case of a crunch—like the Oneevident now—India can play on its relations with these countries to either owertherate of interest or to negotiate or longer grace periods before making

Unfortunately, the short-term component of the total external debt has been increasing over the years, Bowing from just 4.9 per cent in the Compared to 40.7 per cent by 1989. Current figures are not available, but nofficial estimates add on a few percentage points. Says Bimal Jalan, chairman, Economic Advisory Counof to the prime minister: "Short-term wine prime minister: Short to the bills a real worry." Meanwhile, loan backage worry." Packages such as those tied up recently give the Government some breathing space. For a while.

-SUDEEP CHAKRAVARTI

COMPUTERS

Lucrative Alliance

Merger with Hewlett-Packard to transform HCL

HE first court hearing of India's most high-profile merger yet on September 16 didn't work out. Delhi High Court lawyers went on strike, and the court shut down for the day, But that hasn't slowed the merger plans of HCL Limited, India's largest computer company-with unaudited sales of Rs 265 crore in 1990-91-and Hewlett Packard (HP) Company, the world's third largest computer firm, with 1990 sales of \$13.23 billion (Rs 34,400 crore). Ever since the marhan by PRANAB DUTTA

PRE-MERGER

HCL Ltd.

HCL division

Reprographics,

communications, overseas

& finance companies

division has HCL's remaining activities, besides investments in its three subsidiaries-HCL America, Singapore-based Far East Computers and the in-house leasing agency, HCL Finance and Investments (see chart).

Now comes the intricate part. A new company, HCL-HP Limited has been registered-it will be incorporated once the court clears the proposal. Nadar will be the chairman and managing director, with HP(1)'s Raipal as a director on the board. This

company will pick up HCL's residual businessthe second divisionwhile HCL will continue to hold on to the computer business, the current HCL-HP division, Then, HP will pump in money into

inflated prices in the new company, then more tax would have to be paid out by the shareholders, as the taxslab is higher for equity sale through new companies. The biggest financial beneficiaries are expected to be HCL original promoters, who control 78 per cent of HCL equity. And after the swap they would end up with a major stale in HCL-HP, which is billed as the major growth company.

The entire scheme, say insiders is Nadar's brainchild, whom HP(I)'s



HCL's Shiv Nadar: intricately innovative

HCL-HP division HCL & HP (India)'s computer operations HP (India) Retains peripherals & instrumentation business

HCL-HP Ltd.

New company registered

Pumps in Rs 46 crore to HP Co. (US) → pick up 26% of equity Receives existing HCL-HP division Receives HCL-HP Ltd.

existing HCL division

POST-MERGER Name swap

HCL Ltd. HP (India)

Continues as independent operation

1.HCL-HP reflects the merged entity focusing on computers. 2. Original HCL promoters continue to have majority stake. 3. They pay less capital gains tax, having sold shares through HCL, instead of new company.

MERGER

keting tie-up was announced last October, HCL and HP executives have been working at a frenetic pace. The result is a scheme that details how HCL is being transformed.

The plan, put together by four key players-HCL Chairman and promoter Shiv Nadar, Finance Advisor Subroto Bhattacharya. не (India) President Suresh Rajpal, and Vice-President V. Ramesh—is intricate. A precondition to the merger is that HCL separates its computer and non-computer businesses. As a result, HCL has been split into two: a new divisioncalled the HCL-HP division—has in its fold the existing computer operations of both HCL and HP(1). The second

HCL—the plan is to invest \$18 million (Rs 46 crore), and pick up 26 per cent of HCL equity.

So, an existing HCL shareholder, say, with 100 shares will receive 68 shares in HCL and 32 shares in the newly incorporated HCL-HP. And HP will then pick up 26 per cent of HCL equity, paying Rs 176 for a share—the present share price is around Rs 70. This is a bonanza for an HCL shareholder.

This brings in stage three of the plan. Because, once the court clears the merger proposal, the plan is to simply swap the company names: HCL will become HCL-HP, and HCL-HP will become HCL. And original HCL shareholders will end up paying lower capiRajpal describes as "really smart". The merger would leave everyone happy. HP would have piggybacked onto HCL's countrywide distribution net work, HCL would have got access to HP products and technology and HCL shareholders good value for their shares. "When two people negotiates deal," says Rajpal, "both should walk away happy."

Happiness goes beyond the share shuffle. Because, with Hr's product link and HCL's selling skills, HCL-HP willbe a formidable company. In addition to HCL's existing PC and mini-computer ranges, HCL-HP will also be selling H top-end minis which already enjoy good deal of popularity in India, as we

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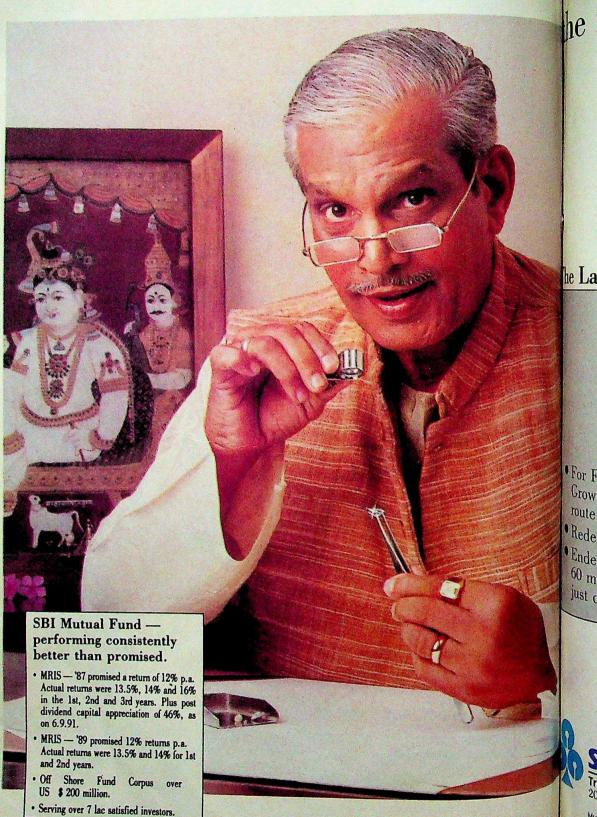
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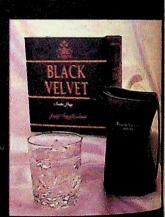
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Soda jug bubbling with the spi of good cheer.

Soda Jug

The best things in life are black

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as HP computer workstations, which egapting the market leaders worldare among the market leaders worldwide. The deal also strengthens HCL as il gears up to meet IBM Corporation's challenge in India—recently, the world's number one computer company announced plans of returning to India, by tying up with the Tatas. When IBM starts delivery of its products in the country. it will be watched byus carefully." says Nadar. "We will work out strategies as the IBM plan for India unfolds.

However, not everything is expected to be smooth. HCL's future, for example. Currently, as much as 85 per cent of HCL's sales comes from computers, which will go to the new company after the swap. And the residual business-reprographics, communications and instrumentation—are not doing too well. The official response is cryptic. "We have aggressive plans for HCL," says Nadar, "You will see these unfold as we go along.'

There could be other problems. For instance, HP(1)—which will continue to exist as an independent company after the merger and swap—will be an instrumentation company, marketing computer peripherals such as laser printers, scanners, plotters diskdrives. HCL-HP will also manufacture peripherals though a different tange. But the real problem could arise when HP(1) supplies peripherals to other computer manufacturers such as Wipro Infotech and Digital EquipmentIndia Limited. Rajpal, as the HP(I) CEO, will be privy to confidential information about these buyers who will be competing with HCL-HP, where Rajpal is a director. Rajpal insists that his 'professionalism' and the fact that he wouldn't be concerned with HCLla sday-to-day operations are enough to ensure that conflict of interest doesn't arise.

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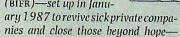
Apart from this, the biggest probem that HCL and HP will have to face is in case HP disagrees with anything its hdian partners do. In fact, areas where disagreements could arise are already apparent. For instance, Rajpal scategorical that HCL-HP would never hyest in a competing firm. "That Would be crazy," he says. Where that places any moves like HCL's buy-out of two years ago is quite obvious.

Otherwise, the move appears ound, and is already being billed as the harketing coup of the year. And till how, there is no reason for either HCL or HP to complain.

GAYATRI BHANDARKAR and SUNDEEP KHANNA

"Exit should not be easy"

IF you set up a company, and it flops, you have every right to shut it down. That is the basic premise of the 'exit policy' the Government has promised within six months. But the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR)—set up in Janu-





Ganapati recently talked to Senior Correspondent VIVIAN FERNANDES in New Delhi.

doesn't think it should

be that simple. Because.

according to Chairman

Ram Ganapati, 63, en-

trepreneurs should not

expect to be absolved of

any blame for a closure,

grounds to clamour for

an easy exit policy.

have

besides,

Y an easy exit policy, industrialists mean untrammelled freedom to close down a unit. I feel this is an extreme position. What is the promoter's stake? He contributes just 10-15 per cent of the equity. The rest is underwritten by merchant bankers or subscribed by the public. Long-term funds are provided by financial institutions (FIs). And banks give working capital. In large enterprises, what happens is that working capital exceeds fixed capital.

It is commonly said—I am not saying it—that promoters usually recover their investment through kickbacks and commissions on purchases—of plant, machinery, etc. So much so, that by the time production commences they would have recovered the investment made. I also understand that it is a fairly common practice to siphon out company money, quite regularly. Some even resort to asset stripping. To give such people the power to run or close down a unit is not correct.

Quite often, the companies that come to us have lost their net worth 20-30 times. They owe huge sums to banks and Fls. Everyone is fond of criticising loan melas to the farming community. What about loan melas privately organised for industrialists by banks and FIs?

Industrialists profess a keenness to pull down shutters than suffer a loss. My question is: whose loss is it? It is the banks; And if they are so eager to exit, why do they contest BIFR orders to wind up unviable units? Over 90 per cent of cases before the BIFR are appeals against closures.

I agree that intrinsically unviable units should not bleed the economy. But a judgement about viability should be left to an outside party. At BIFR we have specialists to study the techno-economic feasibility of rehabilitating sick companies. We consider two points. One, can a production facility produce goods needed by the economy at a price that can cover costs? Second, can we protect employment and avoid social distress? A major reason for companies becoming sick is incompetent or dishonest management. Then there are government policies, shortage of raw material and utilities. Of the 1,100 cases we have considered, we have ordered closure in about 200 and approved 350 revival schemes.

Of course, once we order a unit to be wound up, the process of liquidation is quite long-drawn. To shorten the process, in a few cases, while winding up a unit, we have ordered that it be sold as a going concern without liabilities. In 99 per cent of the cases, you will find that an enterprise is quite viable if not burdened with past liabilities.

As for loss-making public sector companies, the Government has said they would be referred to the BIFR or a similar body. For this, the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act will have to be amended or a new law enacted. The point is whether orders to wind up unviable public sector units or to change their management will be legally binding, and not merely recommendatory. The test of political will on the part of the Government will be in enacting such a legislation.

STOCK MARKETS

7 13 20 27

The Bull Run

1 8 15 23 29

Phenomenal surge in scrips

EFORE the year is out-even some conservative stock-market punters are willing to put money on this-the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) 30-share Sensitive Index could cross the 2,000-point mark. The index has almost doubled in less than a year. and some scrips (see chart) have shot up by 200 per cent. For the stockmarkets, this is the best year yet

While the inkling of a major bull run were evident as far back as May this year, the real surge on the stock-markets began soon after the budget-considered to be fairly easy-going by the market community-was announced on July 24. There has been no looking back since, and that is strange. Because the Indian economy is not exactly in overdrive, and the Government's reforms haven't yet shown results.

Analysts say that the share bazaar doesn't always reflect the current economic set-up but more often, bases a reaction on its perception of the future. "Typically," says Vallabh Bhansali, director, Enam Financial Consultants. "the markets start booming much before the economy is ready to react." Also, in a nebulous way the market belief that investment opportunities for NRIs and foreign investors are likely to increase has also contributed to the boom.

7 13 20 28 2

3 7 13 20 27 30 3 3 May Jun

One of the more important reasons for the massive spurt: the stock-market is still the best place for the highest returns. "Bullion and diamonds are dead markets, and real estate has been very flat," says Ajit Dayal, director, Quantum Financial Services Limited. "In two years, real estate has barely increased by 15 per cent, compared to a compounded growth of 25 per cent a year in the past." Compare these with the exponential growth on the stockmarkets, and it is abundantly clear why several hundreds of crores of rupees flow into the stock-markets fuelling the surge.

Intensive speculation is another reason that is being cited for the current boom. With as many as 2,500 company book closures—which freezes their scrips for more than two weeks. creating a supply crunch—coming in around the same time, the element of speculation is very high.

On the flip side, there is a suggestion that the markets are overheated, and there is a real chance of a slide.

Interestingly, the primary market, or the new issue market, has stayed relatively quiet. Some analysts are of the opinion that this phenomenon has also contributed to the aggression in the secondary markets. But this is likely to change. Says M.S. Verma, executive director, SBI Capital Markets: "In the coming months as much as Rs 9,000 crore is likely to be raised from the primary markets with several mega issues slated.'

6 10 13 16 18 20 Sept 1991

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However, while the parity continues, there are several fund managers, financial analysts and brokers who are advising their clients to stay liquid and book profits at every rise of the index. This is a suggestion that the markets are overheated and there is a real chance of a slide-in fact, by September 20, the index had already suffered a dip. Says Ram K. Piparaiya, managing director, Aridhi Investment Consultants Private Ltd: "The fundamentals now have to be reflected in the share prices.'

However, industries such as cement, textiles and shipping are likely to do well, and this is already being reflected in share prices of individual scrips. What about the market's future? "Don't ask me about the near term," says Enam's Bhansali, reflect ing the fear of a slide. "But for the long" term investor there is nothing to worry, as demand for equity will continue to outstrip the supply. The moral: if you are afraid, clear out now. If you are not, stay for the ride. -SHIV TANEJA

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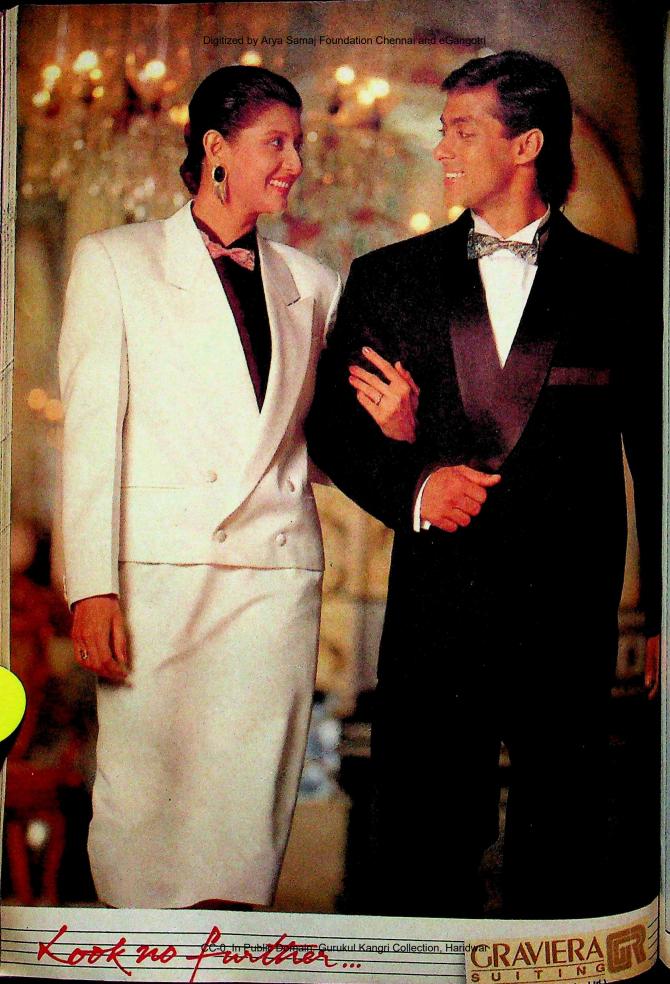
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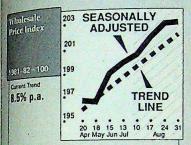
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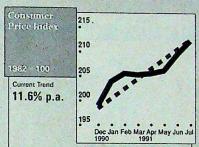
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WITH rapidly rising prices effectively negating the rupee devaluawill need further boosting. Going in for another devaluation this point to stay ahead of inflation involves a real danger of getting at this point a price-exchange rate spiral. There is a very real danger of the Government's proposed economic package being jeopardised.

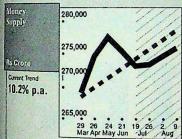
Alldata are seasonally adjusted. Current trends are computed on the basis of six months' (weekly data) or one-and-a-half years' (monthly data) figures.



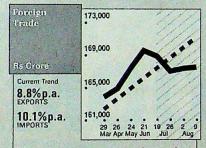
Prices continued to climb, and inflation may be at 18 per cent, higher than Government estimates.



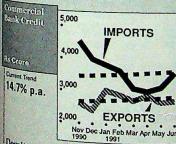
Consumer prices have been rising steadily-compared to 1990 they have increased by about 13 per cent.



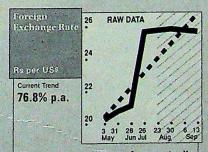
Despite growth, the rate of increase slowed down-this may help curb Inflationary expectations.



Imports grew at a rate faster than exports-this ensured that the foreign exchange crunch continues.



Despite a steady rise in commercial bank credit, industrial performance has been rather dismal.



The rupee appreciated marginally against the dollar-if a weak rupee is needed for exports, this isn't a good sign.

WHOLESALE PRICES

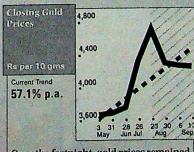
Growth of items in the 2nd fortnight of August 1991

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Cars	
Silk Raw17	
Mustard Oilcake11	
Chillies 10	
Rape & Mustard Seeds9	
Cotton Yarn8	.45
Masoor8	
Pesticides & Insecticides	.83
Bajra	
Iron Ore6	.99
Barley	.60
Jowar6	
Wheat 6	.18
Cashew-Nut	
Mustard Oil5	
Coffee 4	
Ghee 4	
Boilers 4	
Polythene Moulding Powder	
Linseed Oil	
Jute Textile Machinery 4	
Moong4	
Semis Billets	
Urad4	
Arhar4	
Dairy Products3	
Bolts & Nuts3	
Rice3	
Gur3	
Camel Back3	
Tyres3	
Tubes3	
-Coconut Oil2	.88
Turmeric2	88.
Linseed2	.75
Cables & Wires2	.72
Mining Machinery2	.70
Utensils2	.64
Groundnut Ollcake2	.55
Cotton Seeds2	
Soda Ash2	
Cement1	
Khandsari1	
Pet. Crude & Natural Gas1	.91
Caustic Soda1	
Butter 1	
Gram1	

Of the 134 series considered, 120 of them with a total weight of 70.712 had a non-negative rate of growth and 14 of them with a total weight of 14.140 had a negative rate of growth.

hare Price 820 770 84 85×100 720 59,4% p.a.

Share markets continued to boompeculative activity appears to be at its peak, which isn't very healthy.



Over the fortnight, gold prices remained stable-despite inflation, the rush may have peaked, for now.

SELECTED INDICATORS

199	1 1990
Coal Thousand Tonnes, July	0 13400
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By N.K. SINGH in laipur



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Politicians. senior IAS and IPS officers and their spouses, as well as state government employees stand accused of having grabbed valuable land, much

^{of it on} the outskirts of cities, under the ruse of a re-forestation scheme. A

continuing investigation into Perhaps one of the most scandalouslandscams in Rajasthan has stablished that over a four-year period starting in 1986, some 80 Per cent of about 38,000 hectares (4 bighas equal a hectare) alloted' under the plan—valued at about Rs 200 crore—was either in violation of the rules or was misused. What has shocked hvestigators is that a large number of government officials are hvolved. While there is still no dear picture of what percentage of this land went to bureaucrats and politicians, a preliminary list reads like a who's who of the state's officialdom.

Nearly half the land grants given to 24,981 individuals—are expected to be cancelled soon. Declares Chief Minister Bhairon Singh Shekhawat: "It was open loot. The allottees are worse than thugs and pindaris. I will take action against officials who violated rules."

The land was allotted under the Rajasthan Land Revenue (allotment of uncultivable wasteland for development of private forest) Rules, 1986. Each individual allottee was given one to five hectares while societies and cooperatives got up to 25, on a 25-year extendable lease, free of cost. The allottees were supposed to plant trees specified by the Forest Department on

Saplings planted recently to avoid cancellation of grant: blatant evasion

uncultivable wastelands, And 50 per cent of the land was to be given to Harijans, and the landless poor. The incentive was to grow treesreplenishable, quick-growing ests-as a cash crop which would be bought by the Government. The idea was to promote private growing of trees in order to meet the increasing

wood shortage in the state.

But as the Jaipur administration has found, not only was the 50 per cent reservation for the poor brazenly ignored but also, in 80 per cent of the cases virtually no trees have been planted within the specified two-year period. Under the guise of afforestation, many people acquired either cultivable land, or planned to upgrade their wasteland plots to grow cash crops or for use as farmhouses. While rules prohibit allotment of land in master plan areas or within 5 km of city limits, in Jaipur, most grants have been within the prohibited areas while thousands of bighas ofreal wasteland went abegging.

The pattern is replicated elsewhere. More than half the plots have been carved out in three districts-Jaipur, Udaipur and Dungarpur-where land prices

BRAZEN LOOT

Land misused: 30,400 hectares*

Value: Rs 200 crore

Allottees: Politicians, officers of the IAS, IPS and Rajasthan civil services

Rules Flouted:

- In 98 per cent of the cases no trees were planted although that was the raison d'etre.
- More than half the land should have gone to the poorer sections.
- Governmentemployees got plots without seeking official permission.
- Majority of the plots were in city master plan areas or in the river-bed.

Present status:

- 4,183 grants cancelled; 9,588 in line.
- Scheme scrapped in July 1990.

*1 hectare = 4 bighas

are comparatively high.

It was of no consequence that the scheme envisaged giving at least half the land to the landless poor, Harijans, tribals and local villagers. But the list of 2,473 allottees in Jaipur district reveals that most of them have been prominent people including nine IAS and six IPS officers, two dozen each of the Rajasthan Administrative Service and Police Service, politicians, and

the spouse and son of a minister.

Even more shocking is that many members of the allotment committees—the MLA of the area, the pradhan, the sarpanch, development officer, forest range officer—recommended themselves or their family members. The list approved by the then SDM of Jaipur, J.C. Mohanti, was topped by—who else—himself. His booty: 10 bighas of land in Amer tehsil, dotted with not a tree still. Similarly, BJP legislator Ujla Arora gave away two plots measuring 25 bighas to her son—which have been withdrawn since.

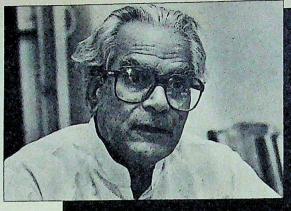
More blatant is the case of the then collector of Jaipur, J.N.R. Gaur. He grabbed all of seven plots measuring 35 bighas, in the names of his three sons and two other relatives. When con-

tacted, his wife, Chandralata, said they had returned the land to the Government. The fact is, the grants were cancelled.

Half of the 15,794 bighas allotted in Jaipur district is in the barred category: river-beds. Further, allotments have been made against incomplete application forms—full names and addresses missing—with the mandatory checking of antecedents waived.

Another smokescreen used by allottees has been getting the plots granted to their wives, whose maiden names are mentioned. For instance, in March 1989, 10 bighas of land was allotted in Jaipur tehsil to one Uma, daughter of Govind Ram. She turned out to be the wife of Purushottam Agarwal, a senior IAS officer.

But the most glaring



t was open loot. The allottees are worse than thugs and pindaris."

> BHAIRON S. SHEKHAWAT CHIEF MINISTER

flouting of rules has been in granting land to government employees, which requires the permission of the state Government. None seems to have been sought. Comments former BJP MP Nathu Singh: "The guilty officials must be suspended."

O ensure impunity, the officials concerned often offered plum plots to local MLAs and politicians. R.K. Pathak, a BJP leader and husband of Vidya Pathak, excise minister in the Shekhawat Cabinet, was one of the fortunate. Pathak and his son, Vijay, were allotted 10 bighas in Bassi tehsil in 1988, when Vidya was an MLA. Justifying why he couldn't plant trees, Pathak says: "I was abroad

when the allotment was made. Besides, the land was too far away."

Similarly, Sushila, wife of Shiv Charan Mathur, was allotted 10 bighas in September 1988. Mathurwas chief minister then. Though he insists he does not "own a single bigha in the state", sources in government maintain the allotment is in his wife's name.

Although the land scandal came to the Government's notice in 1989, it was only in July last year that further allotments under the scheme were stopped and an inquiry ordered. Then ensued a rush to plant saplings.

Now, on the the chief minister's orders, 4,183 allotments have been cancelled in the state till last fortnight while judicial proceedings have been

initiated against 9.588 other grants.

Bureaucrats involved are running scared now. Many of them are avoiding the media. When asked his comments, Deputy Secretary in the Revenue Department. K.K. Sabhiki, whose son Rajiv was allotted four bighas discovered suddenly that he had to leave on tour within an hour. "But no irregularity was committed," he said.

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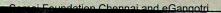
With its senior officer taking such a stand chances of the Revenue Department, under whose purview the case comes, taking a judicious view are slim. Again, case Mohanti, described as the kingpin of the scands conduct a fair probe in collectorate, Bara? Apparently little remedy is available when the fence its starts eating the crop.

WHO'S WHO OF LAND-GRABBERS

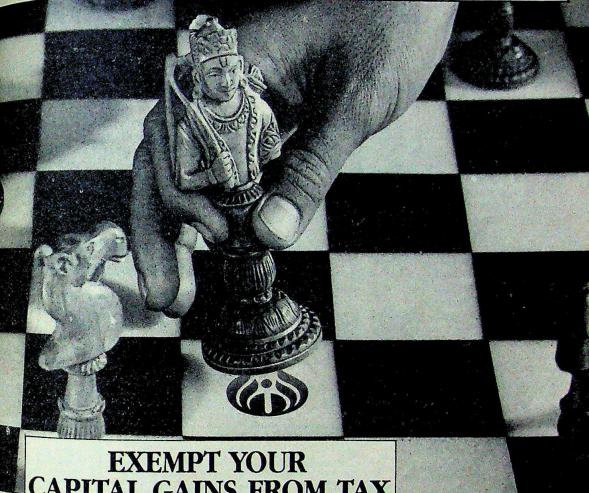
ALLOTTEE	CONNECTION L		
R.K. Pathak and Vijay Pathak	Excise Minister's husband and son		
Dharmendra, Anita, Prabhat, Ashok and Manjulata	Sons and relatives 35 of former Jaipur Collector		
Yashomitra	Son of BJP MLA	25	
Archna Shrivastva	Wife of a Secretary	10	
Uma Agarwal	Wife of IAS officer	10 5 9	
Shantnu Kumar Pramila and Arvind	Udaipur DIG Wife and son of DIG		
Rajiv Sabhiki	Son of Dy. Secretary	4	
Kamla	Additional SP's wife	10	
Piyush Agarwal	Brother-in-law of IAS officer	10	
Sorbah	Son of SP	10	
J.C. Mohanti	Bara Collector	10	
Neeta Agarwal	Wife of IAS officer	10	

In bighas

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KIDNAP MYSTERY

A 24-Carat Crime

had expor Investigations reveal that conman Ravi Choudhry's abduction of four diamond merchant more in 19 was a superbly planned operation and that he has covered his tracks well. Mehta. 26 zonds, als

By RAHUL PATHAK and ARUN KATIYAR

T wasn't the perfect crime. But it was certainly an audacious one. So brazen in conception and execution that it is a wonder it succeeded at all. The slightest of slips and Ravi Choudhry's masterplan could have come completely undone. But with a combination of skill, luck and impudence. the conman effortlessly abducted four diamond merchants

from two New Delhi hotels over a space of 24 hours. And sleuths pursuing the case were truly flummoxed for Choudhry had carried out the entire operation not at one go but in three distinct phases-without, for a moment, arousing a hint of suspicion.

The ingenious caper had been planned with Sobhraj-like precision. So much so, the police have still to zero in on their elusive quarry. Even though the police of five states, the CBI and Interpol are working to sniff out their target. And about 40 places in Uttar Pradesh have been raided. Inching their way to the mystery man, the police rounded up three persons in Calcutta. One of them, Aparajito

Basak, is a suspected collaborator.

The story strung together by the police so far is like this. First, Choudhry shot off a series of letters to about 30 of the country's biggest names in the diamond business, introducing himself as the representative of an Italian corporation, Ferruzzi Finanziaria. He then told them the company's chief executive, who was coming to Delhi in September to inaugurate the local "buying office", would like to meet them to discuss business plans.

The diamond dealers were quick to respond. At that point Choudhry made his first slip. He first wrote back saying the chief executive Ferruzzi Jr would be in Delhi between September 12 and 15. In another letter, he wrote that since the chief executive couldn't make it, Ferruzzi Ir would be coming instead. In other words, while the first letter said Ferruzzi Jr was the chief executive, the second said he wasn't. But the slip went unnoticed. By September 14, Choudhry had persuaded four of the top merchants in the country-Rajesh Mehta, Milan Parikh, Saunak Parikh and Gautam Mehta-to come to Delhi.

Choudhry had dangled the bait. And the diamond merchants bit, without checking whether Ferruzzi Finanziaria dealt in diamonds or not. A tantalising diamond embossed on the Ferruzzi letterhead convinced them of its credentials, A

member of the Parikh family says that since their company had dealt with Italians before, they didn't bother to che

Rajesh's company was more cautious. But not cautious enough. "We asked the Italian trade consul about Ferns Finanziaria. And were told it was a big, sound company." one of Rajesh's relatives. However, they didn't check the Ferruzzi, in fact, dealt in chemicals, and not diamonds

And by the night of September 14, the four dealers were

A SMOOTH OPERATION

Ravi Choudhry introduces himself as the representative of Ferruzzi Finanziaria, an Italian firm. Shoots off around 30 letters to top diamond merchants to discuss business with his Italian boss between Sept 12 and 15 in New Delhi. Four of them respond and arrive.

Gautam Mehta of Goenka Trading Co. checks into the Taj Palace.

Milan Parikh of Mahindra Brothers Group checks into the Taj Mansingh along with wife Archana and cousin Saunak.

Rajesh Mehta and Kulkarni of Beautiful Diamonds check into the Taj Mansingh. dhi. Mi

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SEPT 14: Gautam Mehta is the first merchant to disappear. hotel at 10 p.m. but does not return.

SEPT 15: Milan and Saunak Parikh meet Choudhry at 2 p.m. They vanish after they drive off with him, supposedly to a diamond-cutting unit in NOIDA.

SEPT 15: Rajesh Mehta and Kulkarni meet Choudhry earlier at 10 s.m. They hire a green Mercedes and vanish after leaving the hotel.

Destination

unknown

SEPT 16: Archana Parikh files an FIR at 2 p.m.

CLUES:

■ Green Mercedes found at the Taj Palace.

A Contessa hired by Choudhry found abandoned in R. K. Puram.

Wrong address of Jolly Makers Chambers entered by Choudhry in hotel.

One phone call made by

Choudhry to a bank in Karach

Police pick up suspected collaborator Aparajito Basak in Calcutta.

> THE HUNT: The police, the CBI and Interpol Isunch a manhunt

Curukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

Milan Parikh, 28, of Wahindra Brothers, checked to the Taj Mansingh hotel nithhis wife, Archana, and his sounak, 19. Milan's roup-ranked sixth among hamond exporters in Indiahad export figures of Rs 83.47 merchant core in 1989-90.

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Beautiful

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The same day. Rajesh Webta. 26. of Beautiful Diaands, also checked into the Taj Mansingh with his finance nanager, Anup Kulkarni. His out not caute group, ranked eighth in the wuntry, had an export turnorer of Rs 62.68 crore in 1989-Gautam Meanwhile. Vehta, 40, of Goenka Trading w.had already moved into the Taj Palace hotel. Gautam's goup is ranked 14th in the country in diamond exports adits 1989-90 turnover was & 51.85 crore.

The stage was set. Having completed the first step of his operation with remarkable ficsse, Choudhry moved to the aond stage with amazing red. As nabbing them todherwould have been a probh. he fixed separate meetings with each one of them.

The first to disappear was Galam Mehta on the night of Sprember 14. However, his sappearance didn't arouse ay suspicion as Gautam had ome alone and hadn't spoken anyone. The next morning, ⁴ 10 Rajesh Mehta and lukami left in their rented Mercedes—driven by bu Lal-for their appointwith Choudhry. They returned. Yet the alarm wasn't rung. Although Parikh and Rajesh had met in the hotel by, there was no shop-talk. matters of business, no one sto each other," says one of an's relatives. And that exalyiswhat Choudhry had gamon the businessmen's the business. the next target was Mehul old, owner of Geetanjali Ex-But he had a narrow eshoudhry, Choksi, India's numone diamond exporter, preand to send his sales represenal_{lys}, weha and Jatin Vakani. But Choudhry was only RAVI CHOUDHRY

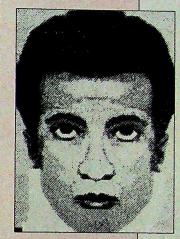
Enigmatic Evader

E is a mystery wrapped in an enigma. Apparently, his name is Ravi Choudhry. But even that's not certain. The only thing definite is that he's a confidence trickster with the luck of the devil.

And that he's 5 ft 7 inches, fair and clean-

shaven. The police say he speaks good English and is at ease in five-star opulence. The rest is all conjecture drawn from his month-long stay at the Oberoi hotel and his dealings with the merchants.

Even the conjecture is riddled with holes. Certainly, he spoke informedly about his stay in the US. But the police aren't sure whether he's welltravelled or just plain well-read. True, he knew the diamond trade and its jargon. But when someone asked him if he'd been in the trade long, he skirted the issue saying he was just a manager.



CBI's computer graphic of Choudhry: king con

Equally mystifying is the fact that he wore Pathan clothes often. But Gujarati merchants who dealt with him are divided over whether his accent was Punjabi or Bengali. More intriguing is the call he made to a bank in Karachi.

Even as the mysteries multiply, the police are convinced of another thing. Choudhry was no tinpot criminal. Aside from being familiar with Delhi and its outskirts, he was in league with a local criminal gang. That perhaps is why he daringly invested over a lakh of rupees into his crime. Again, perhaps.

Choudhry's letter to the diamond merchants



willing to deal with proprietors. And refused to meet the Vakanis. It was only when Jatin called pretending to be Niray, Choksi's nephew, that Choudhry agreed to meet for lunch at 1 p.m. However, at lunch, Choudhry-who discovered that no one from the proprietor's family had come after all-told the sales employees that his boss would

not meet any junior representative.

Choudhry then moved in on his next victims-the Parikhs. At 2 p.m. he called on them. Extremely apologetic that Ferruzzi wasn't able to show up, he offered to take them to the diamondcutting unit in NOIDA instead. He claimed his company had bought the unit. The audacious Choudhry then drove off with Milan and Saunak in the green

Mercedes hired by Rajesh. Archana Parikh-who did not go to NOIDA-is the only authentic witness to the kidnap drama.

Mysteriously, Choudhry called Archana a couple of hours later telling her Milan and Saunak would be late and asked her to re-schedule their plane bookings for September 16. Archana was puzzled. Why hadn't Milan spoken to her? Yet she called Bombay and informed the family.

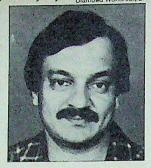
Choudhry was unstoppable. He returned to the hotel around 6 p.m. to meet Bharat Doshi, an executive of a Bombay diamond company. As Doshi wasn't a proprietor, Choudhry discussed business with him but made no attempt to kidnap him. At 7 p.m. he was seen leaving the Oberoi hotel-his base all this while. The hotel had no reason to doubt his credentials as he'd cleared all his bills for Rs 78,000.

The panic button was jammed at 9.15 p.m. When a worried Archana called her father-in-law in Bombay, as the Parikhs hadn't returned until dinner-time. An FIR was filed at 2 p.m. on September 16.

And then the manhunt was

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(From left) Gem tycoons Milan Parikh, Gautam Mehta, Rajesh Mehta: biting the bait

launched. The first piece in the jigsaw puzzle was the green Mercedes found parked at the Taj Palace the next day. It had no signs of a scuffle and no clues whatsoever except for the driver's spectacles. An eyewitness said he'd seen the carwhich had covered 140 km-moving towards NOIDA. However, the distance travelled was obviously more than just a trip to NOIDA with Rajesh, back to the hotel, to NOIDA again with the Parikhs and, finally, back to the Taj Palace.

HEN on September 17. the police found an abandoned Contessa, in R.K. Puram, which they traced to Hertz Car Rental agency. The car had been hired by Choudhry—on a forged driving licence, of course.

Choudhry had covered his tracks well. Even the Oberoi hotel didn't yield any major clues. The address he'd given was simply Jolly Maker Chambers, Bombay. The most interesting lead the police got was a call he'd made to a bank in Karachi.

Given the extensive scope of the case, it was handed over to the CBI on September 20. Interpolis working on the Karachi call to establish Choudhry's identity. And the police are keeping tabs on various gangs who could have helped Choudhry. For, they are convinced that Choudhry's wasn't a one-man show. They believe he was supported by some organisation that

arranged safe-houses and get-away routes. Choudhry himself probably just transported the hostages from where the gangsters took over. Admits the Delhi Police Commissioner Arun Bhagat: "It is a unique case. It's the first timewe have seen a confidence man working in obvious league with a gang of kidnappers.'

Intriguingly, there's been no ransom demand so far. But Bhagat is sure it will come. Since it certainly wasn't a robbery as not a single merchant was carrying any samples on him. Nor was it a case of vendetta. For the victims were selected rather randomly. Says Bhagat: "The man cast his net so wide. It could have been any of the 30-odd merchants he contacted.'

Meanwhile, other tricksters are trying to cash in on Choudhry's caper. Many fake ransom demands have already come in. But the police aren't sure if the families of the kidnap victims will take them into confidence—if and when the call comes.

DIAMOND TRADE

Fear is the Key

HE diamond trade is in quite a tizzy. The abduction of four leading merchants has plunged it into a state of panic. Even at the best of times, diamond merchants are paranoid about security. They are equipped with state-of-the-art security contraptions at Panchratna, Bombay's headquarters for the diamond trade. These include: thick doors and multiple locks, closed-circuit television, cameras that automatically click everyone who enters and an attached intercom facility. Moreover, the merchants never carry any diamonds on them. They never even wear diamond rings.

The abductions have only heightened their insecurity. The four victims belonged companies that were sight-holdersthe cream of the gem trade. Incidentally, there are only 32 sightholders and almost all received a letter from Ravi Choudhry.

Characteristically, the traders were extremely secretive about the entire affair. For example, one trader spotted a discrepancy in Choudhry's letter and stayed away. But he didn't warn anyone else about it. Another, Mehul Choksi, learnt that Ferruzzi didn't deal in diamonds after checking with his office in Antwerp, Belgium. Although he played it safe, he too kept his suspicions to himself. "Though we are a close-knit community, we don't discuss things with each other, says Choksi.

Perhaps they regret it now. For the Rs 27 crore-daily turnover of diamond exports dived by over Rs 8 crore in the week after the abductions. The country's 2,160 dealers exported gems worth Rs 4,972 in 1989-90. This year they hoped to cross the Rs 6.500-crore mark. But the abduction of four main merchants—who contributed Rs 198 crore—has shattered their hopes. "Business has

plunged. And the trade is highly agitated, says Kaushik Mehta. chairman of the Gem and Jewellery Export Council. Promotion Traders also fear it was an insider job. Because Choudhry's used jargon typical to the Indian market. For the moment though, they're just waiting for that ransom note.

Overhead camera at Panchratna market: extreme paranoia



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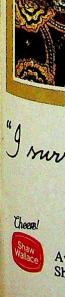
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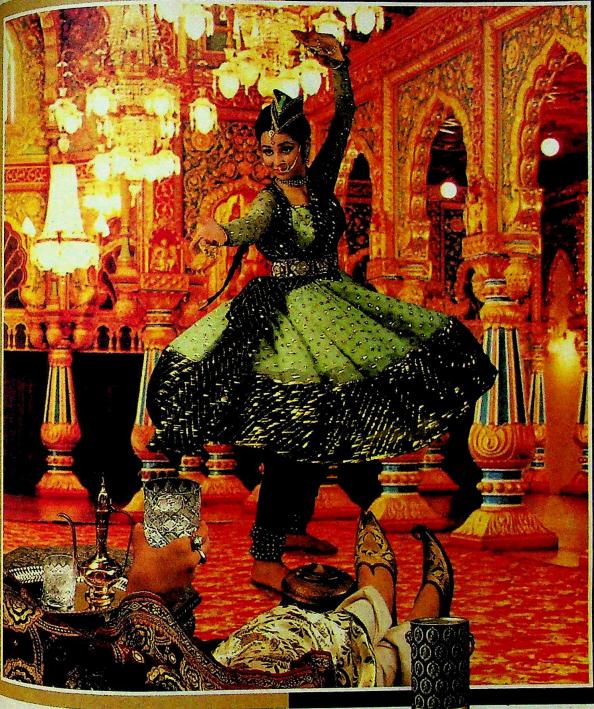
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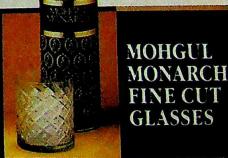
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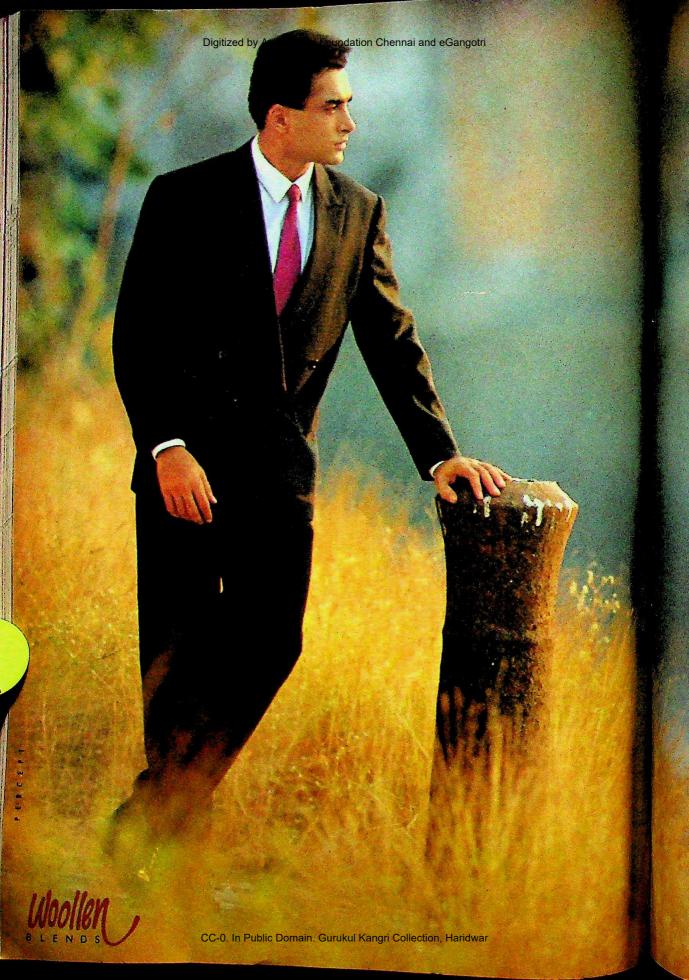


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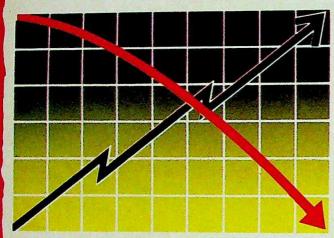


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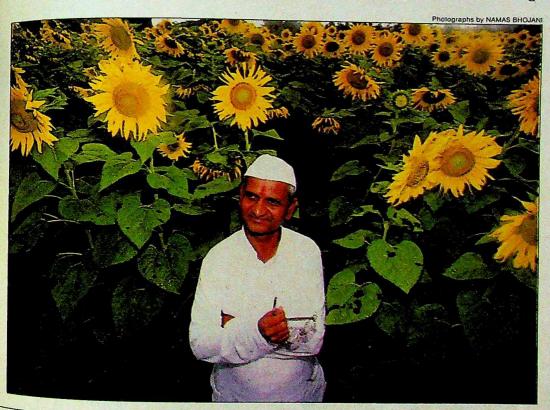
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The Miracle Man

Former armyman Annasaheb's Gandhian grit and pragmatism transform a barren Maharashtrian village into a veritable Eden and make self-reliance a reality.



By RAMESH MENON in Ralegan Siddhi

E is the unlikeliest of reformers: a retired army jeep driver who even contemplated suicide 26 years ago when he felt he had no reason to live.

Then, he found his raison d'etre—transforming a barren, tought-stricken village into a region of plenty. He may aretaken a leaf from Mahatma Gandhi's book on develop-Lent. But his approach is vastly different; he even advocates blic whipping of recalcitrant alcoholics, saying: "Ahimsa sood but the brought b diesing of recalcitrant alconones, saying. h to discipline some people.'

Asone approaches Ralegan Siddhi (population: approxi-Solve approaches Ralegan Siddhi (populauon, upp. hall populauon) in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district, the hiracle that Kisan Baburao Hazare, 53, has wrought becomes evident. Just 15 years ago, the village was like any the 1541 the 1,541 others that dot this drought-stricken zone. bably worse. The fields were barren. The wells dry. Today to appalling. And alcoholism rampant.

Today, the village is a profusion of green trees and blane sunflower patches. The fields are pregnant with Bild An innovative bunding system ensures year-round In innovative bunding system ensures year community to mirrors supply electricity to water pumps. Community bio-gas plants fuel cooking hearths. And fixed Posits in the local bank now total Rs 23 lakh.

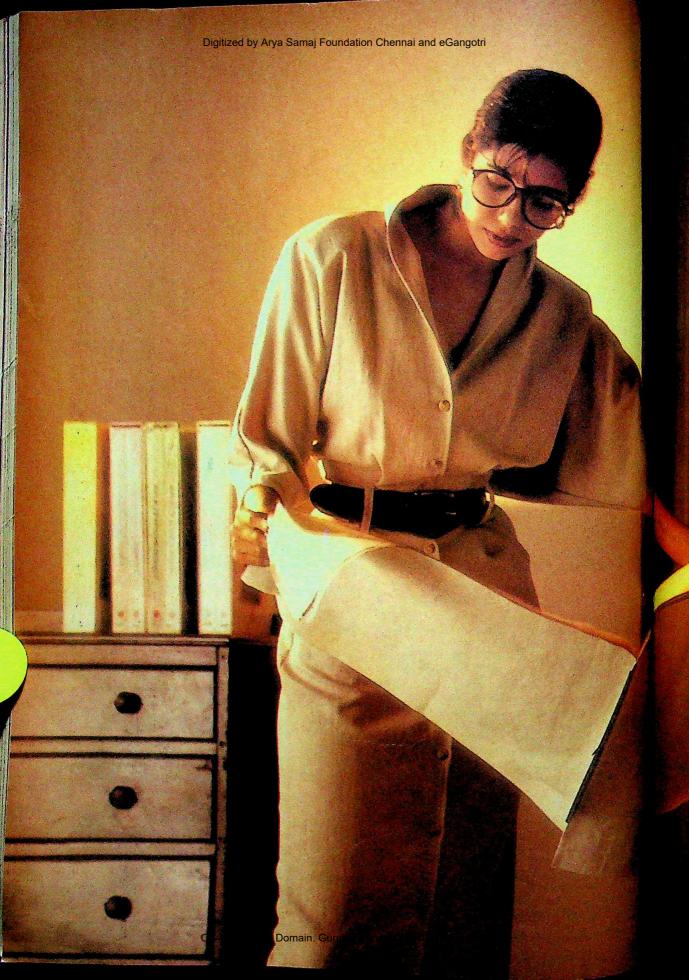
Hazare in a sunflower field: spreading cheer

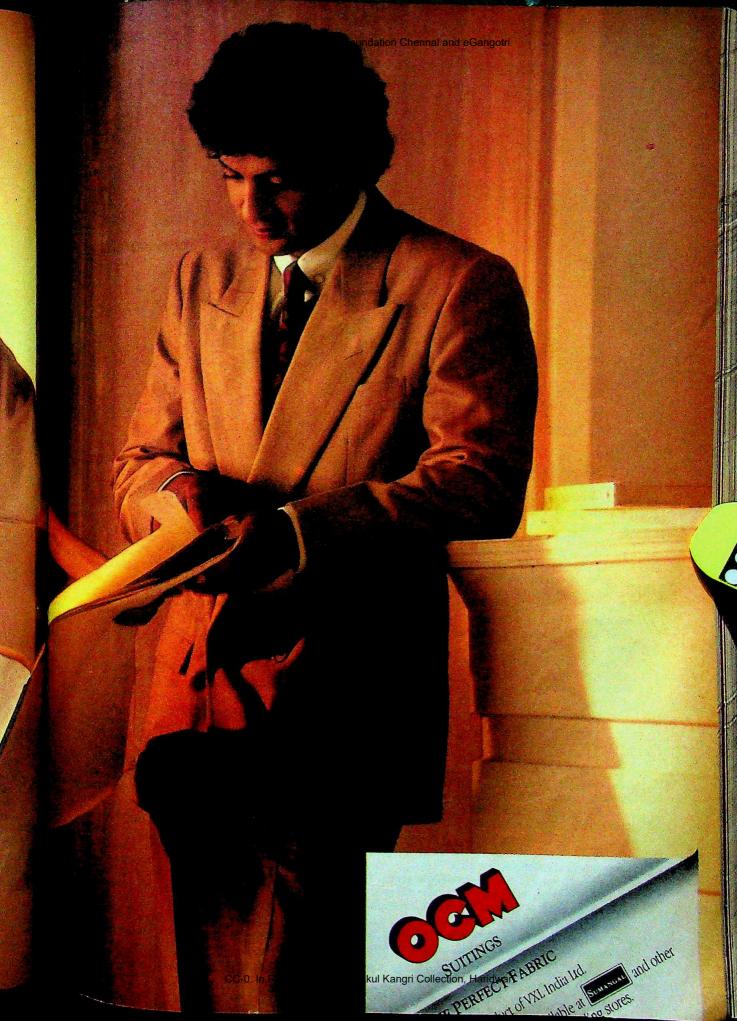
Socially too, the change is perceptible. Getting drunk is taboo. Village women run the panchayat. The drop-out rate in primary schools has fallen. And an air of determination and confidence pervades the entire village.

The catalyst of this dramatic change is the lean and wiry Hazare, affectionately called "Annasaheb" (elder brother) by the villagers. For 15 years he has slogged to make it happen, using a mixture of asceticism, pragmatism and dogged perseverance, in breaking through the thickest of 'bureaucratic tape. As Anil Agarwal, director of the Delhi's Centre for Science and Environment, says: "Hazare's success lies in his tremendous tenacity to fight the establishment."

Hazare has his own reasons. Fifteen years ago when he retired from the army and returned to his village, he found that people simply waited for the Government to help. So using Gandhi's example, he tapped the potential of traditional symbolism. He focused on the dilapidated village temple, using his own meagre gratuity to rebuild it. Moved, the people came in droves with donations. And Hazare learnt his first lesson: "If people are convinced that you are not selfish, they rally behind you."

Hazare then realised that while tackling problems like alcoholism he would still face stiff opposition. So he adopted





Jazare threatened to return the Padmashri if no action was taken Hagainst corrupt development officials. The Government gave in.



unconventional methods. For those who lived off the distilleries, Annasaheb used his old army contacts to find alternative jobs or taught them vocational skills. But those who did not close down their distilleries found them destroyed by gangs of youth, and those who still got drunk were thrashed at the public square. And the police looked the other way.

Simultaneously, Hazare about making the village self-sufficient in food. Using available government funds, he hit upon a simple water conservation scheme. Bunds were built to store rain water. And

when government money fell short, Annasaheb made sure the villagers involved themselves in shramdan (voluntary work)-42 bunds were built. As ground aquifers were recharged, the water table rose from 9 to 60 metres and all the 82 wells are now brimming over.

HE result is many success stories. Like farmer Bahunana Kadam, whose eight acres were once uncultivable, now earns a comfortable Rs 35,000 a year. The village, which once met only a third of its needs, now sells half its produce. The per capita income has shot up from Rs 200 to Rs 1,800. The moneylenders are out of business. And the villagers plan to eliminate middlemen by taking over marketing. Says Hazare: "One day the only thing we will buy from outside will be salt."

Whether getting the villages to plant trees, set up schools or install stable electricity supply. Hazare has been determinedly battling the forces of opposition and apathy. For instance, when he set up a school in the village, it was not granted recognition by former state education minister Shankarrao Kale. Undaunted, he hired teachers, gave them



Solar panels (above); children planting trees: concerted action

free board and lodging and made over 20 trips to Bombay to plead for recognition. When that failed, he went to the zilla parishad office in Ahmednagar along with 250 villagers and observed a fast. Within hours, recognition was accorded.

Examples of Hazare's grit can be multiplied. Recently, when diesel pumps in the village burnt out due to low voltage, he went on a fast. About 12,000 villagers from surrounding areas resorted to a rasta roko on the

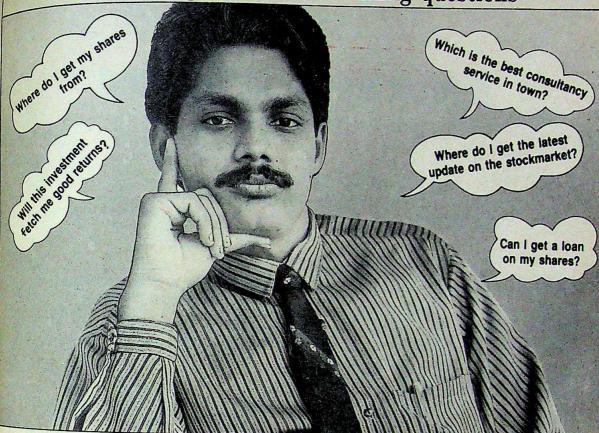
Ahmednagar highway in support. Panic firing by the police resulted in four deaths. And the Government was forced to set aside Rs 38 crore for additional power generation.

And typically, last fortnight, Hazare threatened to return the Padmashri awarded to him last year if no action was taken against corrupt development officials, Backed into a comet the Government gave in, suspending 17 officials.

The real value of Hazare's efforts lies in the spirit of selfreliance that he has been able to imbibe among the villagers the feeling that they can even get the Government to do their bidding. As Sampat Pathare, 50, an illicit distiller-tuned tea shop owner says: "Annasaheb has shown us how change can be brought about by just being disciplined and determined A determined. And we have learnt to look beyond our out families and fight as one for the village."

Among the country's development experts, Raleger Siddhi is a beacon of success. Meanwhile, surrounding hamlets in the neighbourhood are trying to follow sut Hazare hones the Hazare hopes they succeed because, as he says, "if Rales Siddhi is the law." Siddhi is the lone lamp it will be blown out in a storm. many more lamps must be lit".

Some straight answers to vexing questions



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Ashok Leyland Limited

Regd. Office: 19 Rajaji Salai, Madras 600 001.

Highlights of the Speech delivered by the Chairman, Mr. Mantosh Sondhi, at the Fortysecond Annual General Meeting on September 5, 1991.

On the Company's Performance

Despite the difficult economic situation, 1990-91 has been yet another year of creditable performance.

Gross turnover increased by 34% (annualised) to Rs. 922.90 crores.

Exports rose to Rs. 47.28 crores from Rs. 25.18 crores in 1989-90 (annualised).

The Hinduja Group is actively supporting the Company in its export drive and thanks to this support, the current export order book exceeds Rs. 60 crores.

Profit before tax at Rs. 41.36 crores was higher by 69% over the previous year (annualised).

On the Company's Mission

To bring world-class vehicles to Indian roads and to achieve a major export presence by 2000 AD.

On Expansion Plans

A multi-crore modernisation and expansion programme to upgrade technology and manufacturing facilities; and to widen the product range.

On Technological Upgradation

Ashok Leyland will bring the benefits of the world's finest technologies from IVECO, Italy; Hino, Japan and ZF, Germany.

The product strategy will focus on higher fuel efficiency, better emission control, smoother ride and international styling.

IVECO will actively participate in the Company's technological upgradation programme and support the new product range with their global marketing network for maximum export benefits.

A new range of vehicles in the payload segment of 4 to 8 tonnes will supplement the product range and provide a new thrust for exports.



On Government Policies

The new initiatives on liberalised trade and industrial policies signal a bold new approach to integrate domestic production with global markets.

It would have helped if measures such as investment allowance and higher depreciation rate for high technology and capital-intensive industries had been taken to sustain large-scale capital formation.

Durable penetration of export markets is feasible only on superior product technology and quality. These cannot, however, be the concern for exports alone.

Modernising key engineering industries should be an integral part of a drive to achieve international competitiveness, even if it means import assistance in the short run.

Development and maintenance of highways and bridges should be thrown open to the private sector on toll-based systems leaving the State to focus on district and rural roads.

The quality of roads needs improvement to eliminate wastage of fuel and to improve the life of expensive spares.

Road development should be made eligible for direct foreign investment to accelerate improvement.

Note: This does not purport to be a record of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting.

THE FUTURE IS BIGGER BETTER BRIGHTER

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Erratic Strides

Asian track and field trials underline falling standards



REMEMBER the feeling? Just a few years ago, the Indian athletics field seemed chocka-block with talent, promising medals and glory. The front-runners in the pack were

Bahadur Prasad and P.T. Usha. Both hit the headlines at 21, just the right

time for an athlete to break out at international levels. And if they had only followed a natural graph of progress they should have been peaking by now, way ahead of Asia's best. But Bahadur is still strugging to repeat his best docked in 1,500m in June 1990. Usha, who never repeated her Los Angeles timing, is out of the reckoning.

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Last fortnight, of the top Indian athletes gathered in the capital for trials for the forthcoming Asian Track and Field Meet in Luala Lumpur, only Bahadur managed to

qualify. And once again the age-old Mradox of fine talent repeatedly comng to nought stared the athletics stablishment in the face, forcing it to bthink its decades-old training strate-What, observers were asking the again, is it that reduces top Indian thetes into one-meet wonders, in-

capable of growth in a professional sport where both men and women continue to improve until at least the age of 30? The other equally dismal side of the same coin: why do the juniors who promise so much, fade out somewhere in the twilight zone between the

STAGNATING TALENT



BAHADUR PRASAD (24): Personal best: 3:41.98 in 1,500m; Asian best: 3:34.90; capable of better performance.

boys' and the big league?

Experts now believe the answers to both questions may be the same: lack of facilities and encouragement at crucial points in the athlete's career, scientific training and international exposure. A new factor according to Ranjit

Bhatia, former Olympic marathoner and now a sports analyst is "the Class XII syndrome". With the rush for academic grades getting more scorching than the pace on any Tartan track. parents are increasingly disinclined to let their children go the whole hog for athletics training just when they need to slog the most.

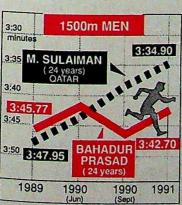
The paradox is that there is no shortage of talent. 'The talent is emerging at a great speed,' says Bhatia, "but it is almost as if nobody is bothered." The last inter-state juniors' meet at Cuttack saw the creation of 42 new marks. In both the zonal meets held this year, the number of entries was 400-plus, over twice the usual number.

> Learning from the failure of the post-Asiad infusion money and facilities into athletics, experts are beginning to question the very basis on which training is organised in India. It seems that the camp

concept that India borrowed from the erstwhile East Germany is flawed. It divorces sports training from everyday life producing individuals demotivated in a relatively open society like ours. The established stars too find themselves cramped in these camps. As a well-known star says: "Athletics stars

Chart by B K. SHARMA

Bahadur Sulaiman, exactly his age, by 2 laconds at the Alian Track and Meet held in Delhi in 1989 buinow is 8 seconds behind the Qatarian Mholigures in world

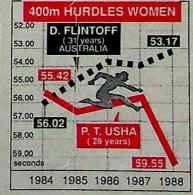


ZENIA AYRTON (19): Per-

sonal best: 11.87 in 100m:

Asian record: 11.22 ; hasn't im-

proved as expected.



Usha finished two places ahead of Debble in the 1984 Olympics but declined while Debbie, three years older than Usha, went on to win gold in the Seoul Aslad. 1988, nearly 6 seconds ahead of Usha. are basically loners, either training alone with personal coaches, or in clutches of three or four, like the Santa Monica Club which rules the men's sprint in the world." Worse, the camp also discourages parents who think sports are taking their children away from studies. Moreover, "long camps turn athletes into training addicts", says National Athletics Coach Joginder Singh Saini. They also leave athletes stale on the D-day-and homesick. Now there is rethinking and future camps may be shorter and coaches taken to schools instead.

story too familiar to need recounting.

The old problem of lack of international competition persists despite the arrival of money into the sport. Take Nachappa. At 13, she began to comrete with seniors and improved consistently. She has been stagnating since the departure of Usha. International exposure becomes crucial for stars like her who are way ahead of local competition. As Lee Evans, coach of the Asian champion Qatar sprint team, says: "Competitive athletics today means competitive experience."

Ironically, some of the measures devised to promote sport may be actually working against it. Offering jobsto sportsmen is one such. Many employ. ers complain athletes lose motivation to train after landing the job. Sandra Thomas of Madras won the 100m hurdles in the school nationals in 1981. But the last one heard of her was that she had become a stewardess with Air India. The job left her no time and perhaps no motivation to train.

Experts say India should learn from other Third World countries like Qatar and Kenya,

WILL THEY DELIVER?



RACHITA PANDA (17): Personal best: 24.3 in 200m; Asian best: 22.62; considered excellent 100m, 200m and possibly 400m prospect.

our model, where top athletic talent is picked up by universities.

The prevailing system does not make the transition from juniors to seniors easy either. An outstanding junior athlete is supported by his state until he is winning. But when he moves to the big league he takes time to make his mark. This is the crucial period when maximum support is needed but very little is forthcoming. Dalip Sinha of Delhi, for example, was considered a good middle distance prospect in the early '70s. His inability to win in the first two years of his entry into the men's group finished him. Many who made the transition successfully owe it to personal coaches. Ashwini Nachappa, the current national sprint champion, for instance, trains under Sunil Abraham. So does upcoming long distance runner Poonam Singh. Usha-Nambiar's is a



PRAVIN FERNANDES (21): Persorial best: 7.83m in long jump; Asian besit: 8.23m; hopes to better 8m. Better techniques may help him.



POONAM SINGH (17): Personal best: 4:30 in 1,500m; Asian best 4:09.5; shown positive attitude by competing in higher age-group.

running 20 to 25 races a year."

Usha and Bahadur are classic examples of lost opportunities because of inadequate exposure. Bahadur, who is still a good prospect, rots here while he should be out competing on European and Asian circuits. He confirmed his return to form with a scorching 3:44.1 at Delhi. But the competition was very poor. He says bitterly: "I have to run all by myself here, the next person is 40 metres behind."

Bahadur feels the main reason for the rise of Qatar's M. Sulaman, his main rival, has been the 40-odd international races he has run since 1989. Bahadur has had only three. And it was at a Belfast meet running against a field consisting of stars like Peter Elliott that he notched up his life's best: 3:41.98. Bhatia puts it succinctly: "Indian training does not blend with

even Pakistan and Sri Lanka. and concentrate on middle and long distance running where depth of talent is still available.

The Amateur Athletic Federation of India (AAFI) says it is hoping to turn things around with the scheme it launched last year with the ITC. Under the plan about 100 "elite" junior all letes are to be picked up every year for comprehensive training which also takes care of their diet. "We are aiming at the 1998 Asian Games," says AM Chairman Suresh Kalmadi.

Once again, India has a good cropd juniors with tremendous great potest tial. But whether they grow into med winners or fall by the wayside generations of their predecessors W depend entirely on what the athletic establishment has learnt from the disa trous post-Asiad '82 experience.

ALOK TIWARI with ASEEM HANDI



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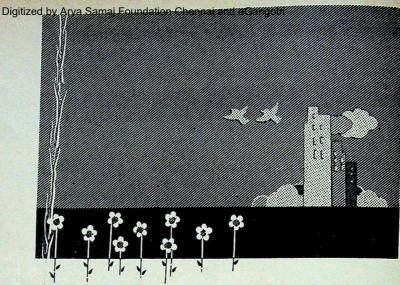
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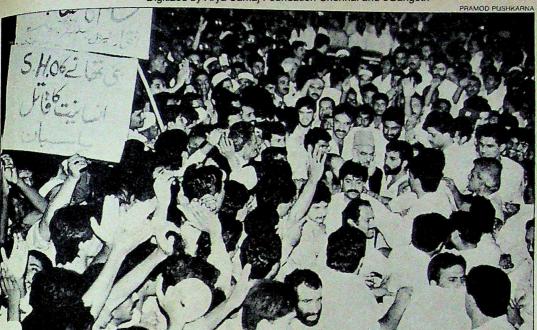
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Jamaat chief Qazi Hussain Ahmed addressing anti-Nawaz rallies underlining the threat from former allies

An Avalanche of Crises

Nawaz Sharif is caught up in controversy, rivalry and seething violence

ITH every passing week, the Pakistan political scene is becoming a more crowded spectacle of disparate and dramatic actors and elements. There are the carping partners undermining the alliance of

the ruling Islami Jamhoori lttehad (IJI), a domineering President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, a cooperatives loan scandal in Punjab involving influential members of the 111, the cult of urban terrorism, and an opposition led by the Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) bellicose President Benazir Bhutto, ever ready to hound the party in power. At the head of the troubled banquet sits Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif attempting to teep his head above the Swirling currents of contro-Versy, rivalry and seething

Sharif came to power less than a year ago on a populist thouse with the ambivalent promise of turning Pakistan

into a modern Islamic state. The liberal, overtly market-friendly economic package which he announced was the modern part of the programme, while the Shariat Bill was meant to keep the conservatives in the Jamaat-e-Islami

SHARAD SAXENA

"There is tension in the alliance because the Jamaat and the MOM are feuding. But I'll overcome by carrying everyone along."

NAWAZ SHARIF, Prime Minister

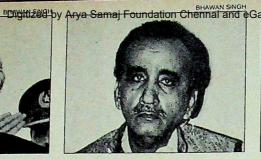
(JI) and the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islami (JUI) happy. The upbeat mood, however, has not lasted. According to Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Ijazul Hag, the IJI did not enjoy the conventional honeymoon period allowed to

every new government. He says: "First there was the Gulf war. Then the Shariat Bill and the 12th amendment to the Constitution took away a lot of time.'

Indeed, things did not work out the way Sharif intended them to, and there has followed an avalanche of crises on all fronts. The slide in the IJI's popularity has been so swift that Sharif has panicked, which is evident in the moves he's been making to deal with the situation.

When the jut withdrew its support to the Government last month, Sharif went in for a cabinet expansion to pacify critics and win over new supporters. Though the rui withdrawal did not







A beleaguered Nawaz Sharif has tried to appease Ishaq Khan, M.K. Junejo and Sind Chief Minister Sadiq Ali by accommodating their sons and sons-in-law in official positions.

threaten the Government's survival, it did indicate the beginning of a crucial exodus of allies.

While the number of cabinet members rose to a record 49, the largest ever in the history of Pakistan, the expansion was also a political master-stroke in that for the first time the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) leader Wali Khan's essentially secularist Awami

National Party (ANP) joined the Federal Cabinet. And he brought back Maulana Sattar Niazi of the Jamiat Ulmai Pakistan (JUP) to counter the estranged JI.

But Sharif opened himself tomuch criticism by taking in the relatives of President Khan, and other regional leaders like Sind Chief Minister Jam Sadiq and former prime minister Mohammed Khan Junejo. Among the new cabinet members is the President's son-in-law Senator Anwar Saifullah Khan. The other entrants: Sadiq's son Mashooq and Junejo's son Asad. Declares the acerbic Benazir: "The expansion is to oblige Khan, Sadiq and the terrorists.'

Inevitably, the Opposition has been busy whipping

up the people's ire against the Sharif Government. The People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) rally held at Karachi on September 11 proved a great success. Benazir did not let go of the opportunity to blame the Government for bringing the country to the brink of collapse. The Opposition has also just released a white paper on its charges of rigging in the last election, backed by some of the Government's old allies. Sharif dismisses this new threat, saying: "No one believes these charges."

The prime minister, of course, has not been idling either. He is cleverly stacking the cards against Benazir. The latest one is that she gave out the secrets of the Pakistan nuclear programme to a group of foreign journalists. And Sharif loyalists like Sadiq have promptly cried out that Benazir be tried for treason. The prime minister concurs cryptically: "The matter will be examined."

More serious than beefing up support for his government, Sharif is faced wale to ensure peace in the Indian Punjab in the pre-Bluestar days."

Apart from blaming Sharif for political ineptitude, the Opposition is also trying to implicate him in financial scandals. The Ittefaq group of industries, owned by Sharif's family, is accused of taking huge loans from cooperative financial companies, suspected to have laundered black

money. He flatly denies his family's involvement. But Benazir, quick to strike against Sharif, has been addressing rallies of the 2.5 million depositors between Lahore and Jhelum, castigating the prime minister.

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mance.

Sharif still has to assuage the armed forces who have always had a finger in the political pie. Though he has gained a slight edge by easing out the ambitious Mirza Aslam Beg as army chief through the normal process of retirement, the army remains a factor to reckon with in Pakistani politics. And its involvement in the making of foreign policy remains crucial, as in its support for the Afghan Mujahedin groups. This clearly puts the prime minister in a diplomatic tight

agreeing to keep out of the Afghan war. Pakistan no longer has a locus standi in the conflagration. This means that the formidable Pakistani defence-foreign policy establishment has to make a quick about-turn and change its strategic perceptions, a process in which Nawaz Sharif would like to play a central role. And he has to do this even as he defangs the generals and weathers the storm unleashed by a rejuvenated opposition. It'll be a tight rope walk. But that is the essence of leading a parliamentary democracy.

-KANWAR SANDHU in Islamabad



"There is no question of any threat to the Government. Benazir Bhutto and the PPP have really lost their minds."

SHUJAT HUSSAIN, Interior Minister

with a Kalashnikov culture in the interiors of Sind and Punjab. His attempt to deal with it through the 12th amendment to the Constitution, empowering the police and the judiciary to handle acts of terrorism firmly and speedily, has made only a marginal difference. A prime example of the cult is the internecine battle between the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) and the JI. Referring to the ostensible peace in the streets of Karachi, Syed Iftikhar Gilani, a former PPP minister accused Sharif of handing over the city to MOM terrorists, and drew a cutting Indian parallel: "It is like asking Bhindran-

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INDIA TODAY . OCTOBER 15, 1991

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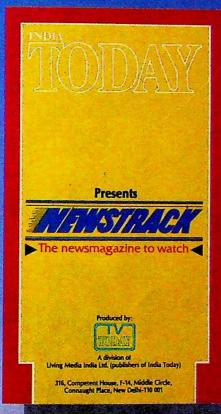
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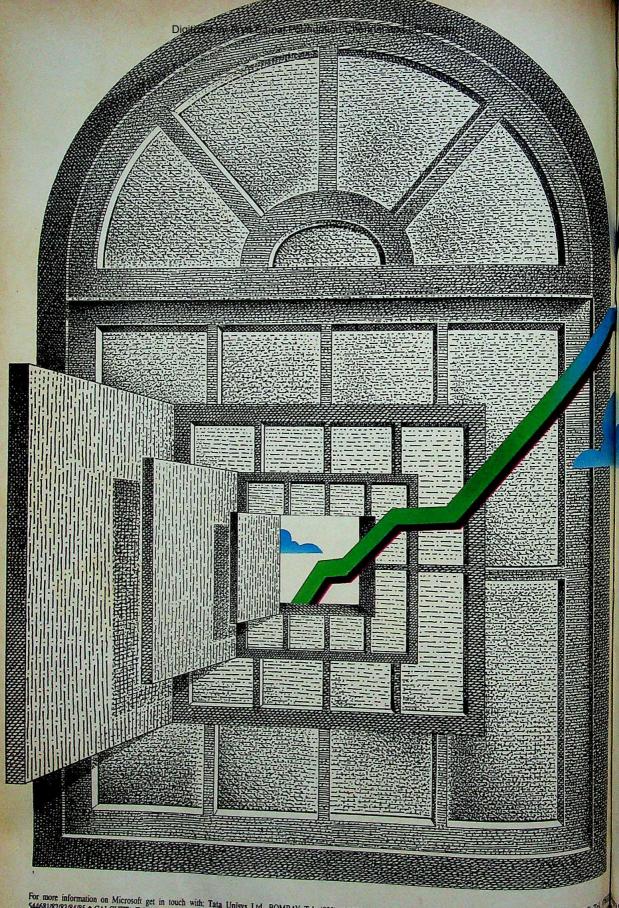
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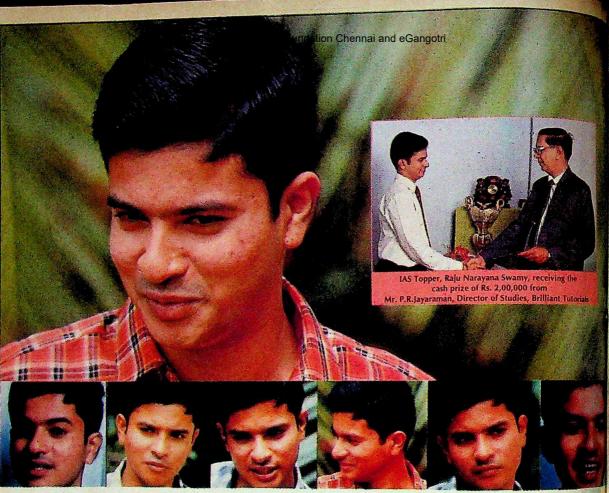
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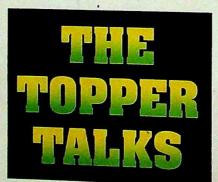


BRILLIANT'S STUDENT RAJU NARAYANA SWAMY NUMBER ONE IN IAS '90/'91

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JULIO RIBEIRO

A Narrow Escape

Attack on Indian ambassador to Romania baffles investigators

THE scene is straight out of a spy film. A super-secret ward tucked away in an anonymous hospital. Three layers of security. And menacng-looking men in incongruous docor overalls keeping a hawk's eye on their ward as well as the odd visitor.

No ordinary doctors, these are commandos of Romania's elite antiprorist brigade trained to kill with barehands. Their ward: former Punjab and Bombay police chief and now

be 62 but it's different when you're running for your life." He was hit as he tried to enter a house for refuge.

Two Romanian commandos, who were following nearly a hundred metres behind, killed one of the accomplices in the car, wounded the other and then captured one of the assailants. The fourth managed to escape. Romanian authorities are confident that he is still within the country and won't be able to get away.

Surjit Singh. The fourth, who escaped, was said to be carrying a passport in the name of Sandip Singh. But all passports were fake. Their Bucharest number-plated car was bought for \$3.700 from an unsuspecting Romanian who has since been cleared. The AK-47s had Hungarian markings and sleuths suspect the assailants bought them from Hungarian soldiers.

The assailants' entry into Romania may have been easy as the country, of

BHAWAN SINGH



ambassador to Romania— Francis Ribeiro—recovering a bullet wound sustained in an eck in August.

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For Ribeiro, 62, it was his second with destiny. In October 1986 he mived an attack in Jalandhar. This the 7.62 mm bullet from an AK-47 beliefed through his thigh. Yet he

he then goes on to give a goes on to goes on to give a goes on to goes thet, He and his wife Melba were begonaroutine evening walk on the evard Aviatorilor when a Renault Arched to a halt. Two men, evibank in but without beards or wo more dear and fired at him. wo more men remained in the car. calliskibeiro: "I ran really fast. I may

Ribeiro in a Bucharest hospital

What is most alarming is that the assailants came so close to their target even though the local Government had ample warning of an attack. In fact, in the three weeks preceding the attack there'd been specific warnings that armed Sikh militants had entered the country. Romanian officials admit that the warnings may not have been heeded as the country was still recovering from the post-revolution purge of intelligence and security agencies.

Investigators, now helped by a senior Indian Intelligence Bureau official, are busy trying to put together the pieces. The three men killed and arrested were initially identified as Rakesh Kumar, Gurmail Singh and

late, has been generous with visas. Hundreds of Indians, mainly from Punjab, land in Bucharest every month hoping to eventually get to Germany. There are also many immigrants from Sri Lanka and Pakistan, which makes it difficult for the Romanians to screen them. "Once you decide to grant visas liberally how do you stop access to some?" asks Valeriu Tudor, director for Asia in the Foreign Ministry.

But the incident has embarrassed the Romanians. The Indian Government, however, hasn't so much as sent a senior мел official to Bucharest. For the mandarins of South Block, Ribeiro—the man who put his life on the line—is at best a forgotten hero.

-SHEKHAR GUPTA in Bucharest

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Customer Grievance Cell



Balbir HEN Bedi-played by Zia Mohyeddin-steps out of his Mercedes to host a champagne party for his newly-graduated son, it

is evident this is not going to be a cliche-ridden series about a downtrodden Asian shopkeeper. In Family Pride, Britain's first Asian soap opera, Asian actors finally have a chance to get their teeth into some meaty roles instead of the crumbs they've been offered so far: stereotyped bit roles like that of the corner shopkeeper, the docile housewife churning

out chapatis and the teenage girl rebelling against an arranged marriage.

surprisingly, Asians in Birmingham and surrounding towns in the West Midlands, where the serial is aired at prime time, are lapping up the programme. It is even screened on Channel 4 at a more marginal hour. The soap that bears more re- . semblance to Hindi masala movies is going all out to woo the Asian viewers. It's even got advertisements for basmati rice and mithai.

BB, the protagonist of the soap, is a self-made millionaire Sikh who begins his career by selling eggs door-to-door and now runs a flourishing business empire known as "BB Worldwide", But BB isn't just a tribute to the millions of Asians who've worked their way up. He also represents the dilemmas of Asian immigrants in conflict with their children who don't understand subcontinental values.

In classic soap opera style, Family Pride follows the fortunes, romances and intrigues of three Asian familiesthe Bedis, the Rizvis and the Lals. Says Rita Seth. a teacher: "If you've seen an Indian film. you'll recognise the

UNITED KINGDOM

Pride of Place

First Asian soap opera is a big success

characters and the situation. The two families, one rich, one less so, the forbidden liaison between the young couple right down to the kiss that

The series was Mohyeddin's brainchild, who is also its executive producer. For years Mohyeddin, who produces arts programmes for Channel 4,

wasn't quite allowed to be seen.'

Asian soap. By 1989, when he felt the neces. sary acting and writing talent was there, Mohyeddin got down to producing the fun series Says he: "My thinking was that it must be a series with lots of

dreamt of producing an

entertainment. It's not a pulpit thing with high moral purpose."

The soap pays little attention to larger problems such as racism. As Nitin Patel, a 16-year-old student says: "Family Pride is about what I call Porsche people, posh people. It isn't relevant to the lives of the Asians in the

East End of London who are threatened by racis gangs." But Farrukh Dhondy, commissioning editor for multi-cultural programmes at Channel 4, says there is plenty of time to deal with important issues.

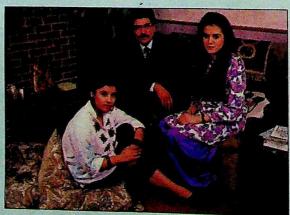
Mohyeddin agrees He has no intention of fighting shy of tackling issues like racism or the Hindu-Muslim conflict But he sees no reason why Family Pride should be "dumped" with the responsibility for it when there are plenty of other programma Asian specialising in currental fairs. Says Mohyeddin "The main thrust of the series is to show the dynamism of the Asian community, the contribution it's made to Britain and how it's been affected by life here.

Mohyeddin realist that any attempt to have dle prickly topics such Hindu-Muslim animos ity will require a delica approach. Says he: the moment all Asian watch Family Pride w the feeling that it's 'o programme." Othi like Dhondy hopeit" be considered ency paedic about Asian tlement in Britain in way that Dickens encyclopaedic Victorian Great expectations

-AMRIT DH

Stills from the grand saga of the three Asian families, the Bedis, the Rizvis and the Lals: encyclopaedic ambitions







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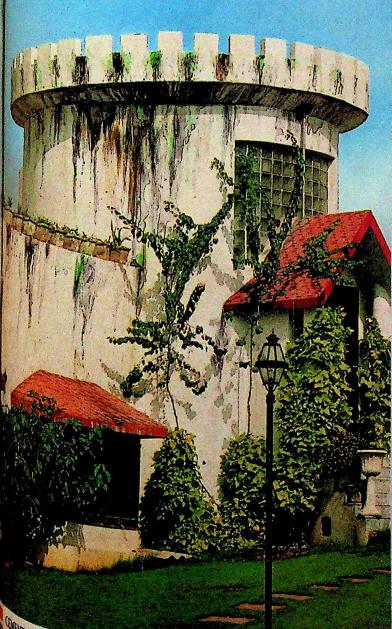
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I.T.C. LIMITED Buy pure, p.

, If the news-casters are still smiling, they've good reason to. Those reading the national news will now get Rs 500 for each bulletin—it was Rs400 earlier. Others on regional networks will get Rs250—Rs 50 more than before. But the smiles may eventually fade. News-readers will be paid according to their worth. Agradation committee is whe set up to place freelancers in various categories. But. onsidering the furore over the recommendations of the evaluation committee premove incompetent news-readers—it's back to square one since they've returned—this committee is

acid).

• Strange are heways of DD. Zafar Hai's elegant Gaviera advertisement has Salman Khan moving pysteriously brough the old Portuguese quarter of Panjim towards Sangeeta Bijlani, sting in a totaurant, to the thinging of Remo's putar. The film maker blowed this advertisement with the

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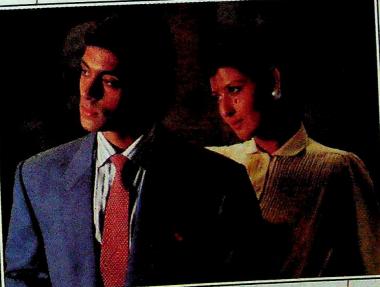
another storm.

and the same harming Goa but with ono singing a ortuguese song, Faldo. the DD men showed tir scissors. No foreign anguages. The only anguages allowed in Commercials are Hindi and Regish. So Remo had to ted the lyrics in English.

That famous smile Mich engulfs the small streen will soon happear, like the Chapter, like the ogamme hosted by haka Shahane—she of Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri



▲ An English news reader: reason to smile



▲ Khan with Bijlani: keeping it Indian

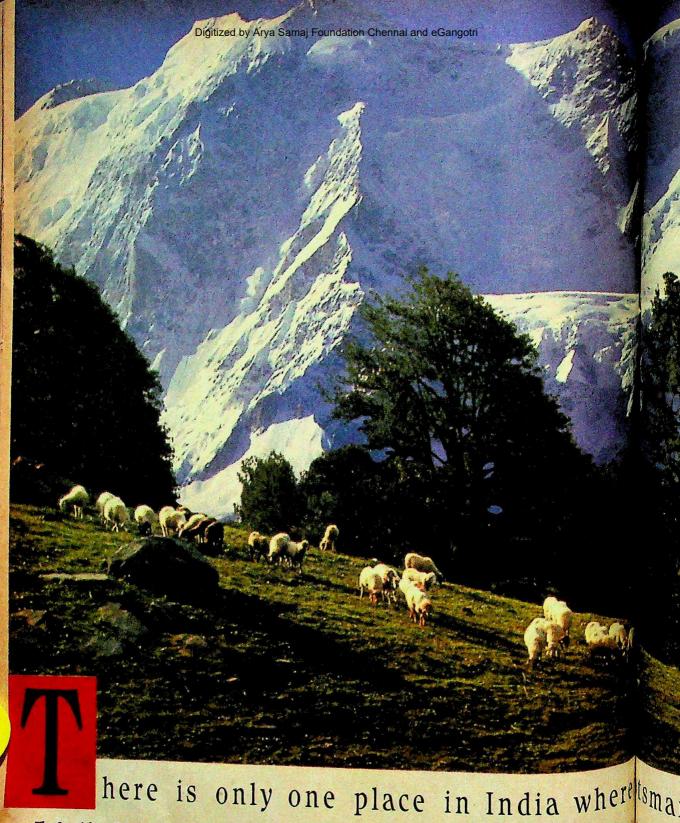


▲ Shankar replacing Subramaniam in the new Surabhi

the smile-and Siddharth Kak who's also its producer, will be produced by PTI-TV from next month. The music. like everything else, will change. Ravi Shanker's sitar replaces L. Subramaniam. The new logo will be M.F. Husain's handiwork. The reason for the switch: at the outset of the programme, pp had decided to divide the culture series between the two producers. Considering its popularity, PTI-TV will keep the gist and effervescence of the series but try to make it more in-depth.

- DD's slip is showing. Last month The World This Week had a blood-curdling item on the slaughter of turtles in Malaysia. The same footage was shown during a regular news bulletin some weeks earlier. Obviously, both DD and TWTW had bought the same footage-as is often the case-from Vis News. Couldn't they have put their heads together and saved precious foreign exchange-and the deja vu?
- DD news might appear staid, and more often than not static. But behind the scene, it's like a masala movie. Recently, a fight between two additional directors of news descended from four-letter words to fisticuffs. And even a chair was employed. Apparently, one of the protagonists considered a news item to be a public relations exercise. The other, whose strength lies in his ministerial contacts, didn't like this. Hence, the action, which stopped just short of calling in the police.

-MADHU JAIN



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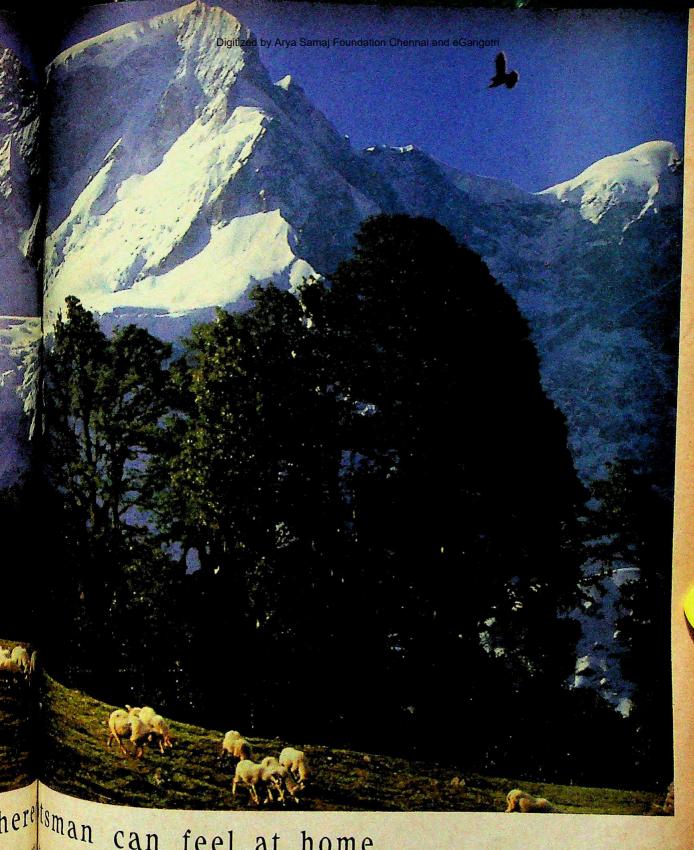
vinegar, breakfast food, pickles, jams of many more.

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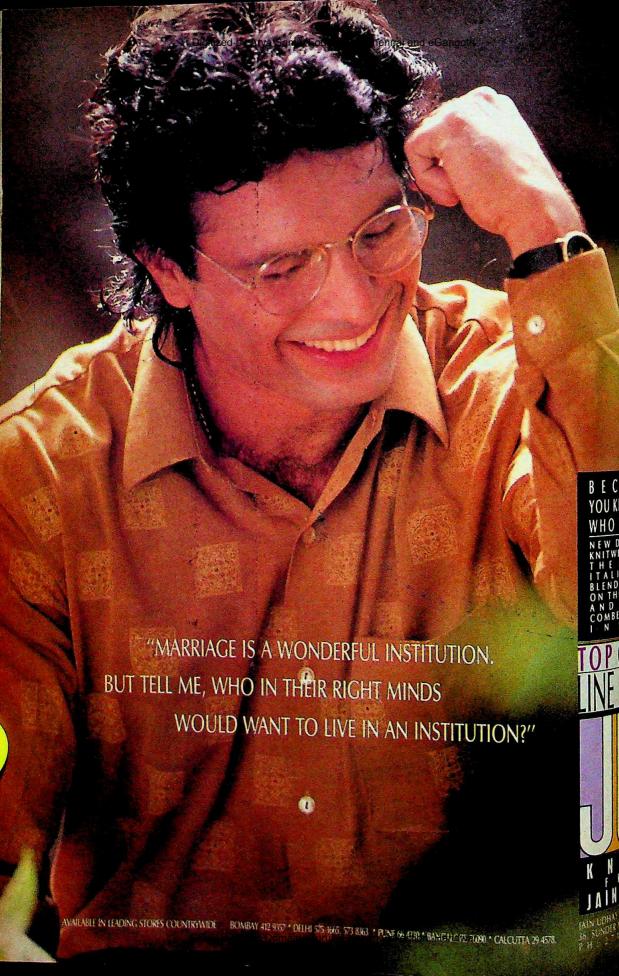
products: We have helped Gality of life with a modern caldispensaries and polyclinics. for promoting sports.

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Taxation by Terror

Extortionists in Bihar give businessmen a bad time

"HELLO, Trishna Enterprises here." "Is that the manager?"

ECAL

OU KNOW

When you close tomorrow, make sure wu keep Rs 60,000 handy. My man will come to collect it.'

"But why... what... who are you?" "Just your neighbourhood Rangdar!"

ONVERSATIONS to this effect are increasingly choking the phone lines in Bihar. Ubiquitous also are the demand notes, slipped under the shutters of an establishment. The system works faster than any Automatic Teller Machine. This is the Rangdari 'tax'. A tax one is entitled to collect for just being a Rangdar—a local terror, a batchet man of politicians or of an underworld don.

Recently the booming busioess in Rangdari extortions virtually brought the already gasping trade and industry—due to lack of incentives and supporting infrastructure—in the state to the brink oclosure. In Ranchi's Kokar Indushial Area, the Rs 3-crore Bihar Rubber Company Ltd, unable to bear the newtax, decided to wind up and shift to Purulia in West Bengal and

Balasore in Orissa. In the Chhotanagpur area, close to 50 units have been hounded out. In Purnea, several traders decided to pull down their shutters in the state's biggest grain and jute

market at Gulab Bagh and to set up shop on the West Bengal border. The Mokameh market Patna district also remained closed for a week protesting the Rangdars' unchecked reign of terror.

Chhabra who didn't pay up; (bottom) Bihar Rubber Co: on the run

नाम बुरा दीगा=

आज ठीक दूकान वन्द्र करने दे वाद अपनी दुकान के सटर के पास =०००० रू रूस देना भेरा आहती क्रां पूर्लीस मी स्ततरकार देखा। की सीस मतलारना नाहें ने से નોંસ

Alarmed, the Bihar Chamber of Commerce called a meeting of leaders of political parties, businessmen and prominent people to draw up measures to reverse the trend. But the mere fact that the word 'Rangdar' was not used at the meeting exposes the prevailing fear psychosis.

The fact is, in a state where crime is almost institutionalised, Rangdari is but the newest form of its diversification. And as usual, it is patronised by top politicians, and the police mostly

> turn a blind eye to it, often getting their own cut.

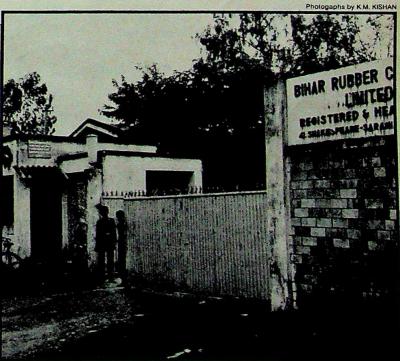
> Though no official estimate is available, the daily turnover of Rangdars is suspected to be to the tune of Rs 10 lakh. And some of the worstaffected districts are Purnea, Ranchi, Patna (rural), Dhanbad. Gaya and Muzaffarpur.

That the Rangdars are

calling the shots is borne out by a recent case in Chhotanagpur. An accountant of the Bihar Rubber Company was stabbed and robbed of Rs 91,000. A suspect belonging to the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) was arrested-and then released. Soon after, some youths operating as 'separate Jharkhand' activists, demanded Rs 1.5 lakh from industrial units for the purchase of AK-47s. Some young men also terrorised the manager of an oil factory and

SHUTDOWNS AND MIGRATIONS

- In the Chhotanagpur region, ⁵⁰ units have been hounded out by the Rangdari menace and more are closing down.
- The Rs 3-crore Bihar Rubber Company Ltd, based in Ranchi, is shifting to West Bengal.
- In purnea's grain and jute market at Gulab Bagh, 30 traders are moving out.
- Ranchi's petrol dealers are threatening to close down all Petrol pumps in the area for want of protection.
- The Mokameh market in Palna district downed shutters ^{lor} a week in protest.



demanded Rs 50,000 in cash. When

he didn't cooperate, they ransacked the factory and assaulted three workers. Incensed, the local industrialists threatened to hand over the keys of

their units to the local administration. Ranchi Deputy Commissioner Sudhir Prasad, who claims to have booked 18 known extortionists, expresses his complete helplessness in nabbing others as the act is limited to habitual offenders. Perhaps the truth is that many of the guilty operate with impunity just because they belong to, say, the JMM which is backing the Laloo

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri. The genesis of Rangdari can be dare to raise a hue and cry.

> N Mokameh market, the notorious criminal Suraj Singh is so emboldened that he has made Rangdari 'voluntary'. He recently distributed a leaflet to businessmen telling them that he has fixed the tax amount according to their turnovers, which they should pay every month. Similarly, in Purnea, the operator of each bus leaving the local bus station has to cough up Rs 150.

Rangdari is often collected in kind.

traced to the mafia-ruled coal-fields of Dhanbad. After the nationalisation of coal, many musclemen, employed by private mine-owners, took to trade unionism and politics. But not wanting to loosen their grip over their fiels, they employed toughs known as Rangdan to impose "tax" on vehicles carrying coal. However, after the Government crackdown on mafia leaders, Rangdars were silenced. But the idea caught on elsewhere. Many Rangdars are honourable men now and are even entitled to security guards. It is a different



The Rangdars run a parallel administration in many parts of the state, and they terrorise the victim so much that he doesn't dare to raise a hue and cry. FIRs are seldom filed.

Prasad Yadav Government.

More horrendous, the policemen at times themselves jump on the Rangdari bandwagon. Like when a Khagaria trader, Mohan Lal Agrawal, was summoned to the police station at Gogri. The officerin-charge demanded Rs 20,000 from him because he was making good profits. When Agrawal pleaded that business was in fact bad, he was put behind bars.

The Rangdars too are targeting not just the small units, but also individual businessmen. Prakash Chhabra, who owns New Battery Centre in Ranchi, received a note demanding Rs 50,000. He first ignored it, but the reminders made him queasy. He has dared to go to the police-but only after writing his will.

But Chhabra is a rarity, for the Rangdars function skilfully. They run a parallel administration in many parts of the state. In far-flung Purnea, for instance, a local MLA rules the roost with an army of goons. Naturally the

Pro-Jharkhand activists; and Suraj Singh's notice (below): becoming bold

आम विजनेसमेनो जिसका जैसा विजनेस है। उसे हम १०-२० हजार व्ययाकभी कमार जो ते तेते हैं। वह सब नहीं केकर जिसका जैसा विजनेस है हम सहीना बाँध रहे है। हमें जैसा विश्वास है कि विजनम मैनी को कोई विकास नहीं होना बाहिये। जगर कोई नहीं देना चाहे तो सझे कोई अल्लुक्स्यांक प्रमाने दीनी दुन्तन निकात्। मरण इटर रूपमा का महीना अज्ञाम ।

In Chhotanagpur, at least 5 per cent of the petrol distributed daily by the petrol pumps goes to Rangdars-free. And where they have a run of the highways too, they have started snatching away cars forcing the owners at gun-point to sign a sale deed. In Patna alone half a dozen doctors have lost their Maruti vans.

matter that the guards are often put to better use-to collect Rangdari.

However, even Laloo, for his own reasons, is unwilling to strike. In a recent case, he fed to the shredder the memorandum of representative bodies of commerce and industry in south Bihar seeking protection from Rangdari. Hisexcuse: most of these entrepreneurs had mis-spent the loans taken from the Government on buying luxury items and now fearing a crackdown for loan recovery they are planning to flee the region.

Faced with such apathy. trade and industry have no other forum to appeal to for succour. Perhaps the only way Rangdari can now endisby the inexorable law of diminishing returns: more widespread and severe the imposition of the tax, more the migrations to other states, and fewer the number of people who can be criminally FARZAND AHMED

with PARVEEN CHOPRA

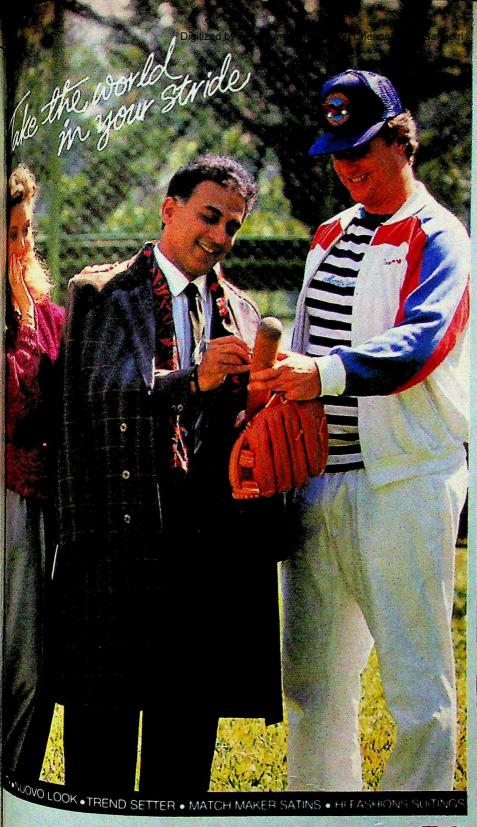
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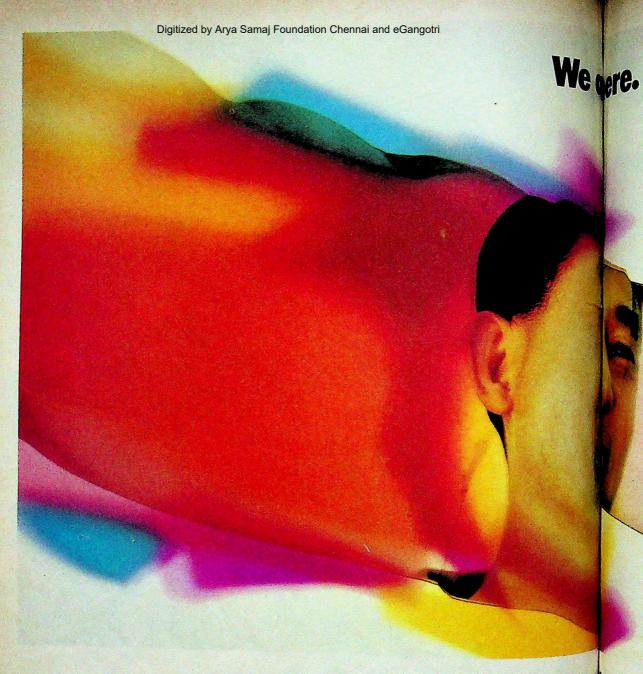






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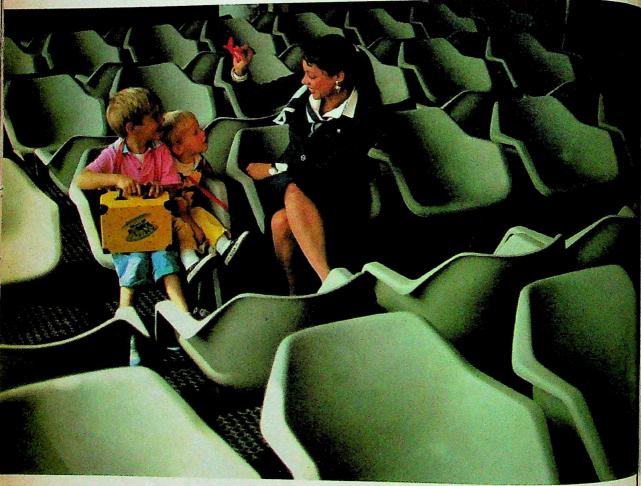
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WRATHI DAILIES

Making the News

Politicians are now turning into press barons

HILE politicians normally make headlines, in Maharashtra the wily ones print their own. Take Sharad Pawar, who, during the last Lok Sabha elections. fund himself favourably projected on the pages of Sakal (circulation: 2.22

lakh), a powerful Marathi daily printed from Pune, Bombay, Kolhapur and Nashik. The paper's anti-VN. Gadgil stand during the elections went a long way in despatching the Congress(I) veteran from Pune into electoral oblivion. The story behind the print? Sakal, barely fre years ago, changed bands. Its managing dirctor is none other ban Pawar's brother, Prataprao.

The story is replayed in the case of Lokmat (circulation: 2.5 lakh), pubsimultaneously fom Nagpur, Jalgaon and Aurangabad. The 20rar-old daily is conbolled by the state's Food and Civil Supplies Minis-In Jawaharlal Darda. Lokwhich also boasts in English edition—has leen a major player in lidarbha politics. Its atack on Congress(I) MP Multenwar cost the party ticket in 1589. Muttemwar, howfer, struck back by aunching his own daily. arawad. By 1991, Mut-

ka kan mainstream polihaving defeated his BJP rival, banks in part to Janawad.

More recently, on Rajiv Gandhi's brith anniversary in August, the Sale's Industry Minister Vilasrao leshmukh launched Ekmat from Launched Ekmai Who fam. Aurangabad. Deshmukh, who fancies himself as a potential Candidate for chief ministership, dis-Corered that he had little or no support hon either Sakal or Lokmat. Clearly. behingther Sakal or Lokmat. Cleaning of his our Could do with a publication Marathof his own. So when Dainik Marath-

wada decided to fold up for financial reasons, Deshmukh moved in, took over its liabilities of nearly Rs 30 lakh. and with minor changes in staff and masthead, launched Ekmat. Although Deshmukh makes generous and altruistic claims, he admits that Ekmat will





edition daily, a key player in Vidarbha politics.



Sharad Pawar uses the paper indirectly to outwit political rivals and project his image.



एकमत CIRCULATION: 10,000 Vilasrao Deshmukh launched a newspaper of his own to promote his political interests.

The failure of some papers has not deterred politicians.

"indirectly help (him) politically".

However, it has not been an easy progress for Ekmat. Says Editor Tukaram Kokje: "Competition from Lokmat is tough. We have a circulation of about 10,000 and we certainly don't think we can improve the figure by becoming a propaganda paper." But Kokje's thinking might not be the deciding factor in the paper's policy. Because Deshmukh admits rather candidly that it would definitely be usedat least during elections—to propagate Congress(I) ideology. Which is perhaps just another way of saying that when necessary, it will project Deshmukh's image.

Darda, a veteran in Marathi publishing, points out: "A newspaper is not a leader or a government. Its main business is news. If it lacks that one critical ingredient, no politician can save it from disaster." The best example of this is the Shiv Sena's Bal Thackeray-run Samana. Although Samana once had a readership close to a lakh. its credibility and influence outside the Sena brotherhood is negligible. But undeterred, Thackeray has plans of

launching Aurangabad and Nagpur editions.

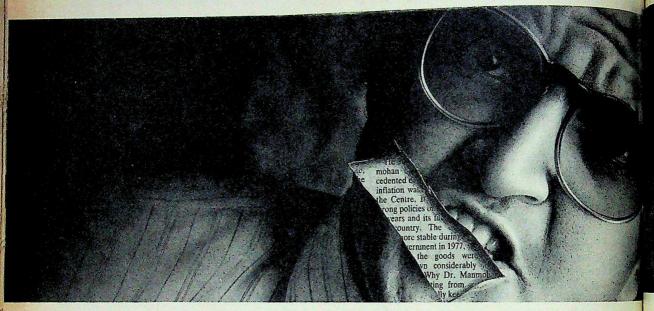
Likewise other papers in the state being manipulated by politicians have been losing credibility and circulation, leading to financial crises. Lokpatra, another Marathi daily from Nanded, has its origins in a political feud between Darda and former education minister Kamalkishore Kadam. Kadam, a Pawar aide, lost the 1990 assembly elections-partly due to the unrelenting attack launched by Lokmat. However. Lokpatra soon ran into labour trouble and Kadam is busy licking his wounds. Muttemwar's Janawad too is reportedly on the brink of closure because it has not been able to find a readership of its own.

The failures however have had little or no effect on the general publishing scenario in the state. There is evidence enough of this in the relaunch of Krushival from Alibagh by Prabhakar Patil, a supporter of the Peasants and

Workers Party. Patil's publication, with a circulation of 13.000, is pitted in the Konkan region against Sagar which is run by the former Congress(I) MLA from Chiplun, Nishikant Joshi. It's a small and desperate political battle that is being fought in a tiny district of Maharashtra. One that may. in the long run, be of no significant consequence. But it once more emphasises the importance of a weapon which has long held people under its grip: the power of the printed word.

-ARUN KATIYAR

Presenting and eGangotri the Godrej 930X Printer



And a censored version of the market reactions.

What was the hurry?
The printers currently in use are quite adequate. And if ______ computers aren't complaining, what was the tearing hurry to bombard the market with this top-of-the-line 300 cps whiz-kid?

Preposterous!

User-friendliness? Or... seduction?

All operations of the Godrej

930X Printer, it seems, are possible through a finger-ty front panel control. And it so designed, even a novice can make full use of the built-in capability. This is not user-friendlines it's downright seduction!

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Both bottom feed and rear feed are possible with the 930X, and such sheet feeding without having to take the continuation stationery out of the track. Feeding of paper and reprof paper is at the touch of a button! Now if this is uncanny, what

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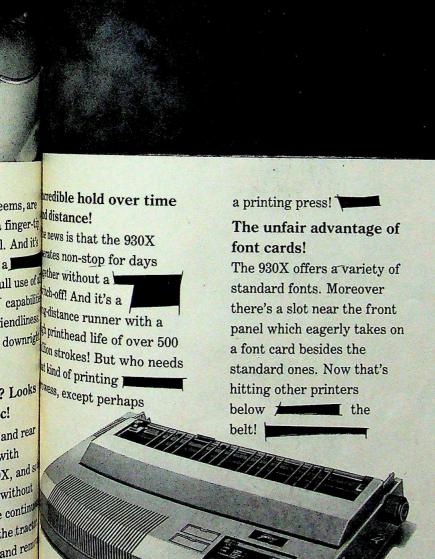
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Compatibility? It looks like conspiracy!

The 930X is available with IBM and EPSON ESC/P Emulations. Plus, it offers the unique option of an EMULATION card which makes it compatible with a host of other systems. Now isn't that taking compatibility a bit too far?

Well, now that you've heard the printable excerpts of the market reactions, it's time to contact your nearest Godrei Dealer for a live demo. Without fear, prejudice, or obligation.



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Rites of Inequity



AMEENA. like Shah Bano, has become a national issue. And like Shah Bano she has initiated a discussion on Muslim Per-II sonal Law. In simple

words, a debate on how Muslim men treat their women.

As an activist and believer in women's rights, one condemns the selling of a daughter strongly. But more than that what need to be con-

demned and studied are the situations that lead parents to sacrifice their daughters. Ameena's parents are poor and illiterate. They could not afford to feed or educate her. They could not dream of marrying her respectably as they could not afford the joda and ghoda, the typical demands of dowry in Hyderabad. They live in a country where grooms are bought.

The attempt to correlate Ameena's tragedy with the dowry problem is deliberate. It is the callous greed to acquire the trappings of modernity that leads to the auctioning of men. It is this sale that gives birth to the Ameenas. And it is this that leads unmarried young girls to hang themselves from ceiling fans in dingy lower middle-class homes.

We have succeeded in putting one sheikh behind bars. What about the millions of sheikhs in every by-lane of the country who get away unpunished? Are the Ameenas any better off at government welfare institutions? We are all familiar

with horrific tales of these destitute women who are victims of forced prostitution. Be it police stations or state welfare homes, they are molested by the people paid to protect their life and

Fortunately, Ameena's case has not turned communal. Not yet. But we have to be extra careful as the pitch on the word 'Muslim' escalates. For Ameena's fate is no different from that of the Roop Kanwars and Kamlas. These women tell the story of female embryos whose fate is sealed at the time of birth, and often before that.

It is when politicians step in that human tragedies rooted in social ineq-

uity acquire labels of "Hindu issues" and "Muslim issues". Banner-waving is a poor substitute for real empathy, and remedial measures.

Coming to the plight of Muslim women, it is a fact that their state is worse than that of the rest. But we cannot get away with blaming this simply on personal laws. It is so because the general lot of their men is poor. As a community, the Muslims' grievances are genuine. They have no jobs. They have a leadership that

Few know that marriage in Islam is just a contract. There is no trauma in rubbing sindoor off and widow remarriage is encouraged.

drives them to conflict and whose prime concerns remain personal law, Urdu, the Babri Masjid and the politics of Aligarh Muslim University. The Hindu leaders they trust betray them once the vote is cast. Their voices are muffled as the newspapers take sides. Their laws and property are not safe as militant Hindu chauvinism becomes more strident.

In such a fragile environment, personal laws become a non-issue. The truth is that the Muslims do not believe that the rest of the nation is genuinely interested in their welfare. The mood is one of suspicion and fear.

We have to wait for it to change

into one of trust and confidence. For the moment, personal laws have to be overlooked because otherwise every Ameena and Shah Bano will be viewed by Muslims as a platform from which people can attack and ridicule the community.

As a Muslim, a woman and an Indian, I believe that educating Mus lim women of their rights within Islam will be beneficial. Few of these women are aware that marriage in Islam nothing more than a contract and not

the proverbial janam, janam ke saath. For the Muslim widow. there is no trauma in rubbing sindoor off. She is not to forcibly wear white or live in isolation. Few know that far from being taboo, Islam encourages remarriage of widows and divorcees. A Muslim woman is also not awar that if her father signs away all his inheritance to his sons, she can contest the will successfully. unlike her Hindu sister. She also does not realise that a khula can be taken if her husband refuses to grant her a divorce.

As a society, we thrive on abusing laws. Like other citizens the Muslim man misuses personal laws to suit himself. [and not condoning the attitude of Muslim men but saying that the nature of the exploits of these men is no different from men of other communities. They have even resorted to bride-burning

To illustrate, I write my own story. When my first marriage fell through, I did not want any maintenance. For, the ver

me offends my ego and my dignity. The key to my behaviour least Laingan and economically-independent individu

On my second marriage not lon ago, I incorporated many conditions the nikahnama. It states my right divorce and to custody of the child case of a divorce. It also has a clau stating that the marriage will nullified from the moment my spot takes another wife. All these guards are valid under the Sharlata signed agreement by both parties realise I am an exception. We have start raising every Ameena, el Kamlatothis level, The exceptions become the rule.

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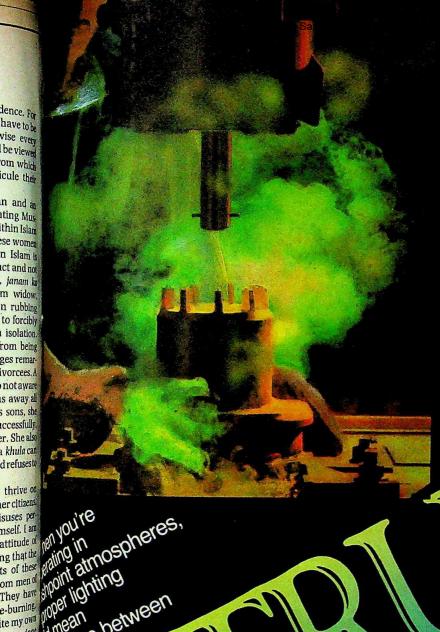
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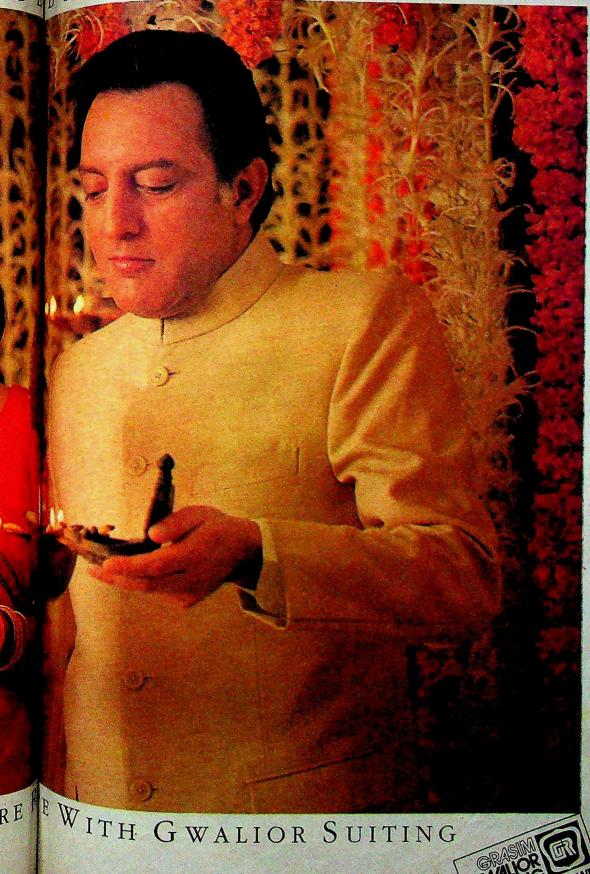




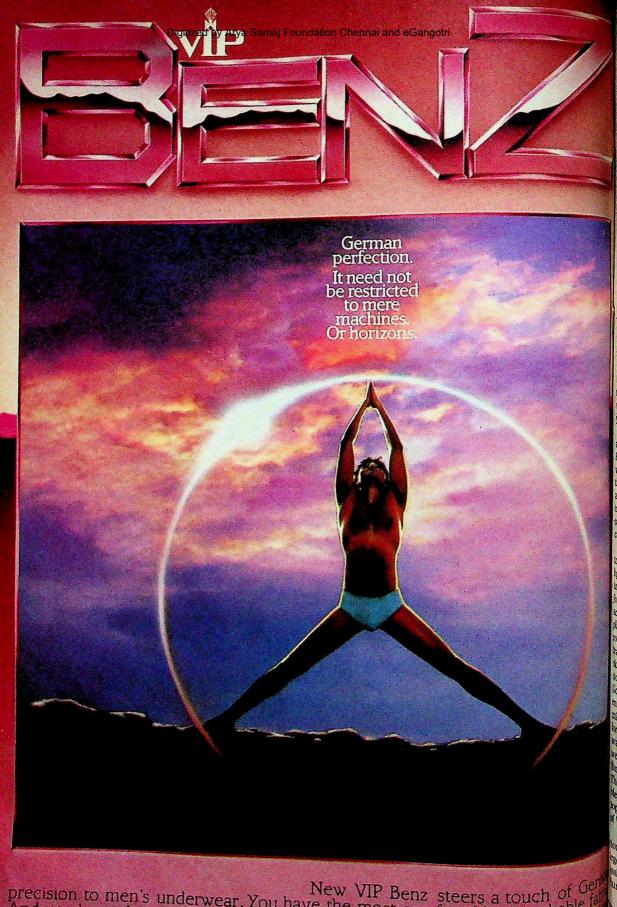
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Tracking the tea route



A TIME FOR TEA: Travels Through China and India in Search of Tea by JASON GOODWIN Alfred A. Knopf Pages: 276 Price: Rs 532

By SHASHI THAROOR

TNan address to a joint session of the US Congress in 1985, prime minister Rajiv Gandhi recalled, with a winkle in his eye, the great affinities letween the American Revolution and the Indian colonial experience. Cornrallis, after surrendering at York-

bwn, triumphed in Bengal. And then Rajiv added mischierously, "Indian tea stimulated your revolutionary zeal".

He got a good laugh for the Lusion to the Boston Tea Party. Bubewas wrong. In 1773 there Mas no Indian tea, at least none hat was properly cultivated ad traded. Tea was a Chinese conopoly and the taxed tea the olonists tossed into Boston Bay ame from Amoy, not Assam.

You don't have to be a teastaller to enjoy Goodwin's debhtful, idiosyncratic journey bits principal sources. A Time a Tea is a young Englishman's acount of his travels to the Panlations, ports and auction associated with the tea ede in China and India. blended with fine infu-

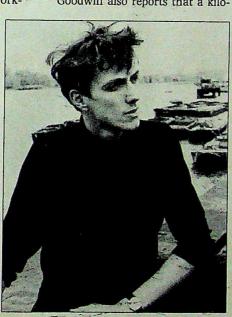
of history, opinion and anecdote. bodwin has a sharp ear, an utterly sing style and a keen wit. His Welcomes foreign facts and folk-Welcomes foreign facts and lam acheerfully receptive spirit. I am by of the cultural egocentrism of travel writers, learning to ch at their scathing judgements of Mrd World societies. But Goodwin is boody innocent of the sneering in livel.

in lively, amiable and unpretensolds prose, Goodwin dips into Chinese tands and English scholarship. He unan border where the Shan Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri hill tribes still eat pickled tea. He im-

parts nuggets like the fact that Tibetans "still calculate Himalayan distance in teas: a four-cup or twenty-cup journey". We learn that the word 'tea" is from the dialect of the port of Amoy; but those who got their tea from Canton call it by the Cantonese word "cha". In India, Goodwin discusses tea-garden life with young planters, finds Scotland in the Nilgiris and tries to catch up with the breathless speed of a Calcutta tea auction.

Despite his excellence, Goodwin misses a few tricks. Observation, not accuracy, is his forte. He gets the spelling of almost every Indian name wrong, and describes the Congress(I)'s election symbol as a 'clenched fist'. Goodwin omits, too, the story of how the Indian masses turned to tea during the depression when demand in Britain dropped and the British traders had to unload their produce on the natives they'd ignored for a century.

Goodwin also reports that a kilo-



Goodwin: delightful narrative

gram of India's prize Castleton tea fetched a "record" price of Rs 1.716. He is woefully out of date: in July this year, Castleton sold for over Rs 6,000 a kg. The buyers were Japanese. Americans, sadly, are swamped with inferior teas from such unlikely sources as Argentina, Kenya and Malawi. The Indian Tea Board's man in New York says he is looking for other commodities to promote. Any future Indian prime minister addressing Congress will have to note that America's attitude to Indian tea is no longer a joking matter.

Tender Echoes

A master's peerless style



ME GRANDAD 'AD AN **ELEPHANT!"** by VAIKOM MUHAMMAD BASHEER Viking India Pages: 204 Price: Rs 85

By O.V. VIJAYAN

T has taken us Malayalees a long time to realise that Basheer is not just a wry humorist, but a stunning tradition in himself. And also a writer with experiences that nearly consumed him; Kerala's only writer with 'lost years'. Democrat, nationalist,

secularist-these descriptions really make no sense because Kerala, until the very recent politicisation of its castes and religions, was a grey area of relative tolerances. Yet, these also maintained their respective identities.

The Muslims of Kerala have created a vibrant sub-culture and a marvellous speech full of heady visuals and dramatic sur-

prises. It is tempting to compare it with the speech of the Black American, but that might be seeking distant analogies.

Muslim Malayalam, with its generous sprinkling of Arabic words, becomes a language within the language. Fortunately, it is also a wellblended presence in fiction. Basheer is an Indian nationalist, a proud Keralite and a reformist Muslim.

However, there is no anger: even in a narrative of stark vagabondage like Sabdangal or of imprisonment like Mathilukal (neither of which is included in this collection). Basheer achieves an astounding fragility with his comic genius.

The novelette which this collection is named after, "Me Grandad 'ad an Elephant!", could be looked at as a bonsai saga of Muslim reform, but that is not what makes it an inimitable



Basheer: wry tone

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotrientalise for the western reade

work. Muslim conservatism is not always the rational adversary but an absurd dream of past splendour, symbolised by an elephant which stomps in and out of conversation long after it has been dead. And obscurantism is undone through a few crisp collapses.

But sociology is the least of the Basheerian design. Like no reformer of lesser calibre could do, Basheer meets absurdity at its own level, by joyfully taking on a matching personal absurdity. Thus it becomes a bond between equals, an act of love.

The three novelettes included in this volume are a representative selection. Each has its variant of tenderness, but the *Elephant* reveals a love so expansive that none but a child or a master could contain its words or fictional order.

Basheer achieves this miracle, as he tells his translator, by writing like he

> Basheer has pared the Malayalam language to its skeleton, taken the bones apart, broken them into pieces and honed the pieces into insane beauty.

talks. Sometimes I wonder if the old man is conning us, because what he has done to the Malayalam language, one would normally assume, can be done only by going through the agonies of literary tapasya.

Basheer has pared the Malayalam language to its skeleton, taken the bones apart, broken them into pieces and honed the pieces into insane beauty. Basheer's dust jackets ought to carry this statutory warning: "Imitation by lesser craftsmen is injurious to health."

Professor R.E. Asher's seems to have been a labour of love. Years ago, it was with great misgiving that I first heard of the linguist from Edinburgh who was translating Basheer into English, because linguists are often hostile to literature. But Asher has done a remarkable job and I wish I had more space to examine the translation, which is staid, yet creative. The coining of the Elephant Ant is a stroke of genius.

Magic Verse

Superb rendering of classic



THE ABSENT
TRAVELLER
Translated by ARVIND
KRISHNA MEHROTRA
Ravi Dayal Publisher
Pages: 92
Price: Rs 80

By AGHA SHAHID ALI

T seems fortuitous that a few months before reading *The Absent Traveller*, Mehrotra's "witty, terse, spare, memorable"—in A.K. Ramanujan's words—translations from the

Gathasaptasati, I came across Not Far from the River, David Ray's versions from the same text. Not knowing Prakrit, I must judge the fidelity of the translators by relying on my multilingual ear and on my sense of what the original must be like, gathered from my inwardness with folklore, wedding songs, love lyrics and religious poetry in various subcontinental Mehrotra wins the prize.

Mehrotra lets the originals speak for themselves, trusting them sufficiently, without embellishing them with needless lyricism, so that the poetry seems ancient and contemporary simultaneously. The translations succeed in this nearly impossible task by observing the originals' elliptical moments, by not filling them in, as Ray seems to. Mehrotra is not interested in explaining, only in letting the Prakrit be so that the English can become the Prakrit. What is not said is important in all poetry, but in poetry like this (as in the ghazal), it is terribly important. Line after line has an epigrammatic impulse. What is not said, thus, resonates because of what is:

Lives in main street,/Attractive, young, her husband away./A light wench her neighbour, hard-up too./And, unbelievably, still chaste.

No decoration here, no explanation. How tempting it is for us to succumb to the inherent dominative mode, to see extra meanings, to Mehrotra resists such temptations, and quite easily, I suspect, becauseheis among the few Indo-Anglian poets to discard them in his own verse—an admirably suited translator.

I also admire his courage—given most Indians' craze for "propah" bit ish English—in often adopting a contemporary American idiom (notice "main street" in the four lines just quoted), giving his versions an attractive liveliness, an immediacy.

As we read The Absent Traveller, we can "feel" the technical subtleties the are so crucial to forms as spare and close as 'the simple, distilled gatha'. The elliptical impulse and the resonance creates help to make this possible, as defined the many space of the same and phrasing. Style, here, has to be almost everything.

In his 'Translator's Note', Mehrotra observes that as "readers we some

times feel possessing about certain authors. They are our discoveries, and write only for us. When the whole work comes to know of them the magic of their pages destroyed and we feel robbed. With books in

Mehrotra: perfect pitch



languages.

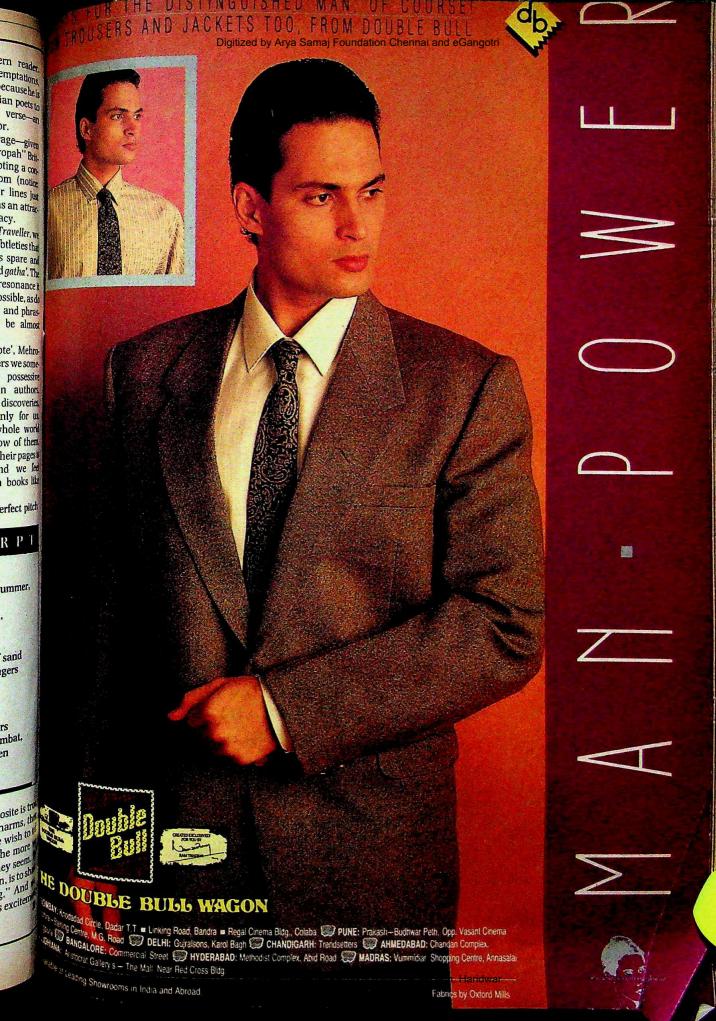
EXCERPT

As to a traveller
His shadow in hot summer.
So to a niggard
His comfortless gold.

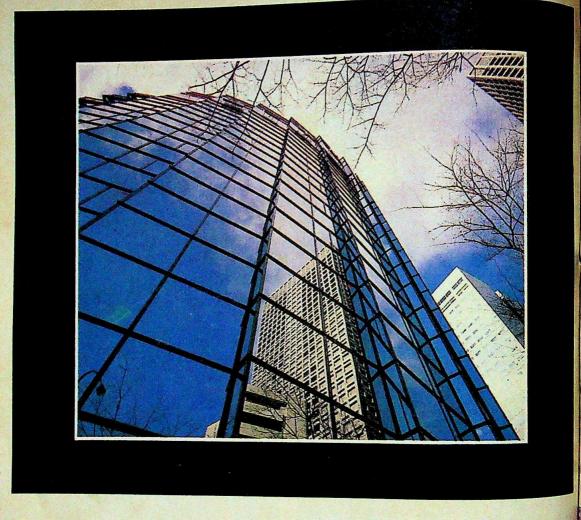
Her anger's a fistful of sand Slipping through fingers When she sees him.

Like two noble warriors
Laid low in close combat.
Your breasts even fallen
Look handsome.

the Gathasaptasati the opposite is to Instead of keeping their charms, the pleasures to ourselves, we wish to others about them, and the more tell the less exhaustible they seem translate such a book, then, is to she the excitement of reading. And most gratefully, share this excitement with him.



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Aluminium	Steel	Glass
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cooler as well. Glass can be furniture—dining tables, no large, and large, no large, and large, no large, and large, no large, just table tops and can be used to make awe-inspirite houses. And in many cases, glass is so much cheaper that

other building materials. More and more people are using glass for more and more reasons. Why don't you.

The Indo Asahi Glass Company Ltd.

THINK GLASS, IT'S TOUGHER THAN HAND THINK. CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Handwar THINK.

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FORD MADOX IRD by Alan Judd (Flango: Rs 310). An engrossbiography of a highly derrated literary figure, thor of The Good Soldier i peer of Joyce, Pound wrence and Greene.

ooks

ARBO: HER STORY by ntoni Gronowicz (Pennin; Rs 225). The reclusive ar's story told by a one-time over. Compulsive reading.



HOUGHTS (Directed by Man Rudolph. Starring: Demi Moore and Bruce Willis). Unusually for Die Hard good man, Willis plays a inte and gets bumped off by his battered wife (Glenne lady). But as she and her and (Moore) try to destroy ius, the murder becomes aclicated. Slow but good.

THEIMA & LOUISE (Diand by Ridley Scott. Star-Susan Sarandon and Davis). Using the countryside Utah and Colorado. Scott weaves the tale of two small-town girls on holiday who end up in trouble. Controversial for its negative message on women on a liberation trip. Good.

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aper that

ABOUT BOB? (Diby Frank Oz. Starring: bard Dreyfuss and Bill May). A whacky comedy out a Publicity-craving Schiatrist, Dr Leo Marvin and his persistent Gat, Bob Wiley (Murray). tedefines the doctortetha distributionship to take the doctor's life, psychthe psychiatrist. Despite ds to be over-stated.

'MASTERS' (Jehangir Art Gallery, Bombay; October 1 to 7). The best of some outstanding artists from



the capital. A nice assortment of Delhi's palettes, an exhibition has already fetched rave notices in the capital's press and art circles. The 42 canvasses range from those of stalwarts like Ramachandran, Krishen Khanna, and Ram Kumar to fairly

new entrants like the promising Sanjay Bhattacharya.

SHAMSHAD HUSAIN (Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi; September 23 to October 15). Shamshad's nicely outlined figures again. But this time they are in monochrome. The artist is quite adept at depicting contemporary relationships and angst in his etchings. Above all, it is the everydayness of it all which is most striking. However, it is the Triptych, the only oil on view, that steals the show.

SUBRATA GANGOPADHYAYA (Gallerie Ganesha, New Delhi; September 27 to October 16). Yet another



interesting Calcutta artist. His paintings and his drawings are thickly sensual, with rich colours and just that whiff of the surreal. The themes are essentially rural-based, and the oil paintings in particular are attractive. Nonsense, which depicts three carefree villagers astride

a buffalo, and The Well are especially impressive.

TACOBELL (Bandra, Bombay). Named after the popular Mexican fast-food chain in the US, this new eatery on the Pali Road-Carter Road junction boasts of a more varied fare. Its menu includes Italian and Thai cuisine in addition to seafood and, of course, Mexican food. Emphasising authenticity, Tacobell, run by former Taj Flight Catering employees,

uses sauces and herbs flown in from abroad. But with just seven tables under a portico, there is a sense of being crowded out. The fastest moving items: seafoodincluding pomfret, crabs and Thai prawns. And no danger of Montezuma's revenge.





ovies

APSARA (Directed by K. Raghavendra Rao. Starring: Sridevi, Chiranjeevi). The ethereal Sridevi plays an angel mixed up with cliche bad-

PRASHANT PANJIAR



dies like Amrish Puri with more voodoo up his sleeve. For this, heaven can wait.

FIRST LOVE LETTER (Directed by Pahlaj Nihalani. Starring: Monisha Koirala. Vivek Mushran). Schmaltzy. It's Romeo in Krishna garbflute and all. Can be ignored.

RAISZAADA (Directed by Bharat Kapoor. Starring: Asha Parekh. Shashi Kapoor). Honest cop out to get don. Parekh's the only nice touch. Avoidable.



PATEL RAP-II

(By Kuljit Bhamra; MIL; Rs 24). The saga of Mr Patel. who sells porn from his London store. Also features Part I that had rap fans in raptures.

WESTERN CLASSICS

(Super Music Co; Rs 40 each). Mozart, Chopin, Wagner, Bach: a feast for those perennially starved of western classical music in India. But the quality of recording could do with improvement.



HOPE (By Jagjit Singh and Chitra Singh; HMV; Rs 35). The ghazal wave may be ebbing, but unfazed, the original duo continue. Some more of the old magic.

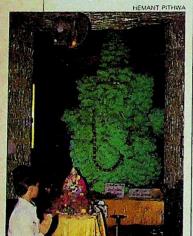
EYE · CATCHERS

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Fruity Fest

 The gods have gone bananas. Literally. Stringing together a whopping 21,111 bananas, Bombay-based idol Vijay Matavkar maker crafted this unique Ganapati for the Ganesh Chaturthi festival. And the mega-idol, which took 36 hours to put

Ganapati goes bananas



together, has been attracting devotees in droves. Nobody is likely to forget that spectacle for a long time to come. So what, if elephants can't remember.

A Royal Direction

On the surface, an unlikely match. She, the dusky. sensual half of a royal-politico duo. And he, the icono-

Uma and Sharma: new roles

Hands of Clay

clast film maker: New Delhi

Times and lots of television.

So the quiet wedding of Uma

Gajapati Raju and Ramesh Sharma-both in their late

30s-had even gossip-mongers surprised. Uma, ecstatically ensconced in her

Gurgaon farmhouse, says she's moved in the right

direction: "It's nice to have

one of India's great film

directors direct your life."

Sharma may be holding

the baton, but there'll be

"They're brand names

Reluctant Return

The water baby is back.

Ready to make a splash

again in celluloid waters.

Leggy and green-eyed Nafisa

Ali, who retired after her

debut in Junoon to polo-

land—she married polo star

'Pickles' Sodhi-is making a

comeback in J.P. Dutta's

now," says Sharma.

Royal brand?

no

name-changing.

 Where does Pritish Nandy, the editor of The Illustrated Weekly of India, disappear in the afternoons? No, they weren't dirty afternoons. Just fiery ones. The Mr-Do-Everything was firing clay in the kiln for his signature line of tableware. Though a cross between Paul Klee's linear fantasies

and pure kitsch, the tableware, according to Nandy "is functional art". Has the editor found his hands of clay? Or is this just a Nandy bull in the china shop?

ing a British-born lady ad-

justing to the Indian heat and

haze, the actress is cast oppo-

Nafisa: making a splash

site Vinod Khanna. Says director Dutta: "I had a definite character in mind. And she

liked it. Though I had to suade her." Tough what-getting the lady b for more heat and standard

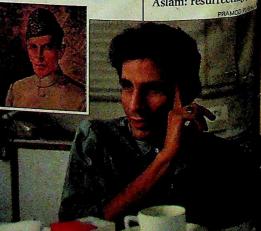
Changing Image

 In all the Gandhic loid hagiography, Jinna ways got short shriftgreenish-hued

(Alyque Padamse Attenborough's G had Jinnah fans red. To give him by some hue, American rector Margaret Birch making the \$20-mil Jinnah the Incorruptible with an encouraging on the back from the l stan Government. Kar based Imran Aslam, actor and news editor of News, plays Jinnah. "It wonderful if they use Att borough's cast and shoot India," says the lean As who is trying to become leaner for the role.

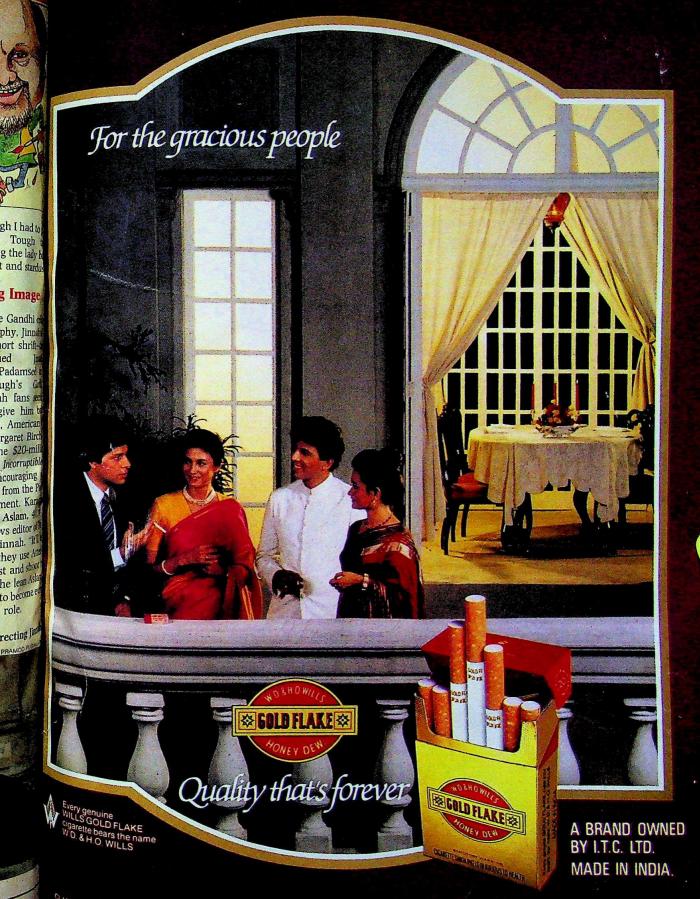
Aslam: resurrecting file





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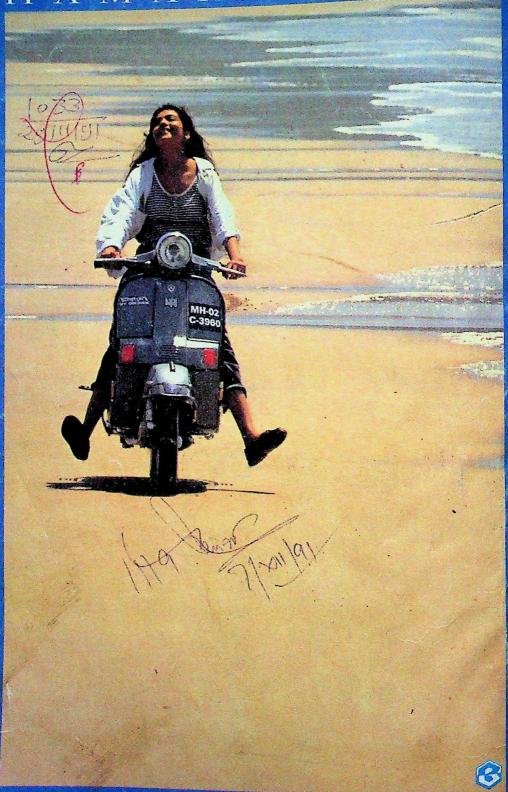
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TASIDE BE CHONS: THE ACID TEST

PALLAV JOSH

Kapil Dev, Azharuddin, Manjrekar and Tendulkar

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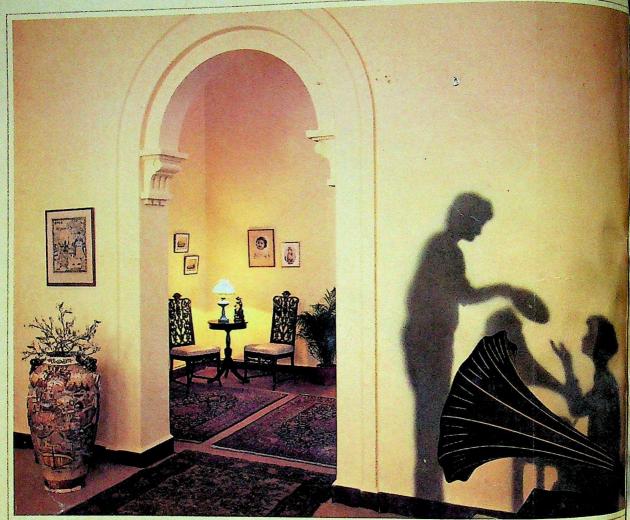
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As the busiest ever cricket season begins, Indian hopes rest

On what is rated as the best batting line-up in the world.

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A Cricketing Bonanza

Beginning this week, comes an unprecedented cricketing bonanza that includes the Sharjah Cup, an India-Pakistan one-day series followed by a full tour of Australia and then the World Cup. A look at India's much toutedbatting line-up, and an assessment of



The Dying of a Dream

McCluskieganj in Bihar flowered as an idyllic homeland for the Anglo-Indians, only to fade a generation later. The utopia now lies in a dilapidated state, and the inhabitants live in a twilight world of memory and despair, eking out a livelihood in penurious conditions.

PHOTO FEATURE......136



Cocking a Militant Snook

The situation in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) is explosive. The increasing number of people crossing the border are being turned into militants in camps in POK, and the refugees are projected as victims of Indian Army atrocities. Meantime, local politics is also becoming inflammatory.

SPECIAL FEATURE



Consolidation Moves

In less than five months after the general elections, the country is getting ready for another round of polls on November 15. With 16 Lok Sabha and 58 assembly seats at stake, the political parties are taking the byelections seriously, and are gearing up to consolidate their positions.

SPECIAL REPORT.



Coming Into Their Prime

Television stars have at last arrived. Pankaj Kapur, Neena Gupta, Aneeta Kanwar are household names today, and as famous and glamorous as tinsel-town idols. In most cases it's a hard-won recognition from a mass audience without compromising on artistic integrity.

TELEVISION



The New Colonialism

Mark Tully, BBC's well-known bureau chief in New Delhi, depicts India's kaleidoscopic scenario in his new book, No Full Stops in India. India's regeneration has to come from within itself, he contends. In the extract he dissects the imperialistic undertones that mark cultural exchanges.

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A BREAK INTO THE FUTURE

It's time we Indians took a hard look at ourselves ("What the World Thinks of ourself, October 15) and stopped gloating over our past. The future seems uncertain, especially if we cling on to our tattered ideological baggage.

New Delhi

S. ACHARYA

WORDS AND DEEDS

All political parties and politicians have averred that there should be 60 per cent reservation ("Stealing a March", October 15). Now, all of them should resolve that they will get themselves and their families treated by these quota doctors.

New Delhi

ANIL AGGRAWAL

INFAIR CRITICISM

The story projects only one side of the issue ("The Greying of India", September 30). The young are not always after the money and property of their parents. When a daughter-in-law is brought into the house, her every action is watched critically. The innumerable deaths of newly-married girls speak volumes about the cruelty of elders.

392

Co

TARA DEO

- With the pressures of rapid urbansation, the troubles and travails of the elderly need to be looked at afresh. We must explore ways to mitigate their despair, stemming from their growing alienation. SACIUN SAKSENA
- When I think of myself 30 years from now, I wonder how my children will treat me. And instantly I realise, well, the same way as I look after my parents and elders. The younger generation must realise this. 56 APO AJAY SHARMA
- Inyour article I have been referred to as a Punjabi writer. I am a Hindi writer and one of my novels, Zindaginama, has been awarded the Sahitya Akademi award for Hindi in 1980. New Delhi

KRISHNA SOBTI

EGO HASSLES

This battle ("Royal Feud", September 30) is between Vijaya Raje Scindia who is a top BJP leader and Madhavrao Scindia, a minister in the Congress(I) Government. Therefore, it seems to be a clash of egos.

SANJAY CHOPRA

lt is a pity that Madhavrao Scindia, from whom the nation expects so much, has cannot be nation expects. But has caused such anguish to his mother. But



We have projected an exotic image of ourselves to attract tourists. But that isn't the environment that hard-headed businessmen want.

AASHESHA GAUTAM

We need to present an objective image to attract the attention of foreign investors. But we should also be proud to be Indian and not run ourselves down.

New Delhi

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the Rajmata's palace intrigues, as well as her passion for wealth and domineering nature are no doubt as much to blame for her sorry plight.

Roorkee

KRISHNA SRIVASTAVA

STRONG STANCE NEEDED

It is foolish to flav a government for deploying armed forces to contain militant activity ("Pushed to the Brink", September 30). Would anyone have had any praise for the Assam Government if it had submitted to ULFA's demands? Unfortunately, Saikia's Government is being criticised at a time when it requires tremendous moral support and continuous encouragement from the rest of the nation.

Visakhapatnam

I. SRINIVAS GIRI

TIMELY TRAIN

The hospital on wheels ("Cure on Track", September 30) will prove to be a boon for people residing in remote rural areas, who are cut off from the miracles of modern science.

Tilaiya

AMIT KUMAR CHANDAN

■ The project is a sheer waste of public money. It will only give publicity to some multinational companies. Instead of such gimmicks, the Government should make long-term plans to mobilise specialist doctors to visit rural health centres for a short-term stay.

Lucknow

R.S. DHAR

TALKING BIG

The silence of the so-called defenders of minority interests over the plight of Ameena ("Lost Child", September 30) exposes them. Their only interest seems to be defending insignificant relics of the Muslim era. They give two hoots for the advancement of our society.

Calcutta

AFZAL F. HAFIZ

It is heartening to see an ever-growing concern to protect children from exploitation. This was amply evident in the recent incident involving the kindness of Amrita Ahluwalia in rescuing little Ameena. Bombay CHRISTO DASI

WORTHLESS VISIT

From all accounts, the prime minister's visit to Germany has been a failure ("Striking the Right Note", September 30). He and his entourage of officials were unable to convince German businessmen that the spirit of liberalisation has percolated to the lower levels of our bureaucracy. Notwithstanding our prime

minister's intentions and declarations, socialism appears to be alive and kicking. **Bombay**

CASTE JUSTIFIES ALL

It has become customary for our politicians, particularly the self-proclaimed champions of social justice, to see everything from the communal point of view. Paswan's supporters ("Splurging Spree", September 30) defend him by claiming that the charges are casteist, even when the charges seem irrefutable.

Pondicherry

S. CHANDRAMOULI

It is unfortunate that India has national leaders like Paswan who not only misuse public money as ministers, but also treat it like their personal property.

RAVI C. PANDIT

CULTURAL BONDS IGNORED

Your comment ("Lessons in Federalism", September 30) made distressing reading. It completely ignores the cultural thread that still binds together the Indian people and which forms the basis of the unity of our country. Despite the political and economic difficulties India is faced with, we are not comparable to the USSR. an empire disintegrating before our eyes. With our sagacious elite, I am confident that India can be spared a similar fate.

France JAGBANS K. BALBIR

BIASED REVIEW

Since when have critics become soothsayers to predict that Ranjit Hoskote ("Fine Debut", September 30) would become one of the best English poets in India? Hoskote is just one of the many voices in Indo-Anglian

missionaries shows the Government's emphasis on the wrong thing. They teach the values of dedication, devotion to duty and compassion.

New Delhi KHORSHED CHANDRA



The expulsion of elderly Christian missionaries may seem cruel. But behind the gentle faces lies the selfish motive of conversion.

New Zealand

M.M. JOGLEKAR

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and e Gangothd such encomiums tend to declarations. | The expulsion of three | unfairly single him out when so many to unfairly single him out when so many other stars are also rising. Hyderabad NAZEEMA KARIM

CORRECTED VERSION

Apropos of the Kashmir debate, I have been quoted as saying that Kashmir was completely annihilated. Actually I had used the word 'alienated'. Regarding the Anantnag rape incident, when I visited the place all the witnesses said that the army was involved. But the authorities tell me it was the BSF. I stand corrected.

BALRAJ PURI

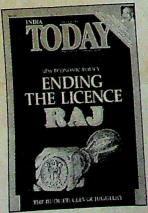
DISAPPOINTING RESPONSE

As a physician and molecular biologist. I am disappointed at the poor focus on research and development in Indian industry ("Poised for Growth", September 15). The unfortunate perception among most western establishments is that Indian organisations do not even reply to queries. If South Korea and Taiwan can provide prompt, courteous and aggressive communication, why should any corporation waste weeks on supposedly cheaper Indian biotechnology services? In this highly competitive industry, time really is money. Minnesota, US G.S. SANDHU

BLAME SHOULD BE SHARED

The public sector cannot be blamed entirely for its failure to earn huge profits ("The Big Burden", September 15). It has to compromise profit with social welfare goals like employment. Moreover, the Government should give some autonomy to public sector units to enhance their efficiency. SUBIR MAHANTA

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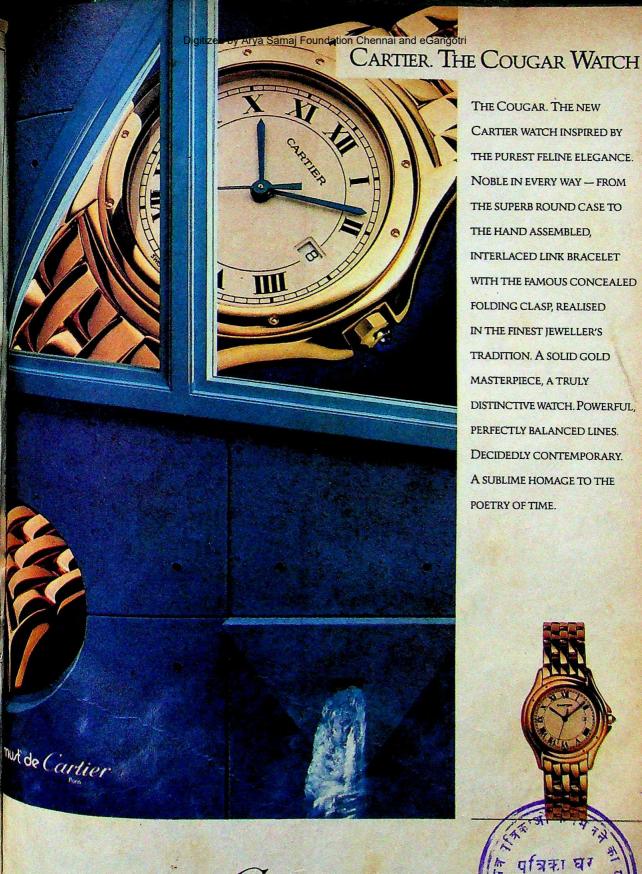
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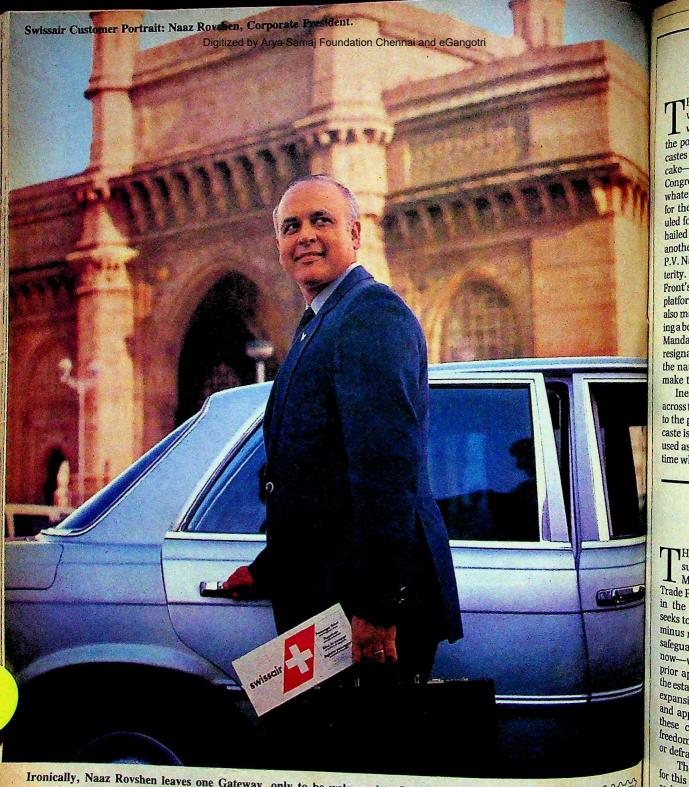




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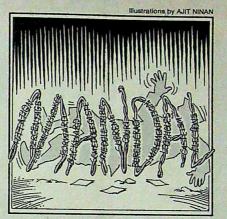
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Mandal Revisited

HE Government's sudden revival of the Mandal formulawith an extra 10 per cent for the poorer lot among the forward castes as the additional icing on the cake—is an obvious effort by the Congress(I) to milk the issue for whatever it is worth in preparation for the crucial by-elections scheduled for November. The move was hailed by political observers as yet another example of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's political dexterity. He had pulled the National Front's one-dimensional electoral platform from under its feet while

also making inroads into the BJP's constituency by throwing abone to upper caste Hindus. And even some of the anti-Mandal voices have accepted the latest move with a sense of resignation: that Mandal is now an indestructible part of the nation's social fabric and that economic criteria will make the reservations dose a little more palatable.

Inevitably then, the student protests that have erupted across the country have been of a lower intensity compared to the previous year. But all this cannot hide the fact that caste is once again—this time by the ruling party—being used as a cutting edge for partisan political gain even at a time when the Supreme Court is considering the constitu-



tional validity of the formulation. The court has given the controversy a reprieve by postponing further hearings on the subject for a month.

This is merely a hiatus. The basic issue cannot just be swept under the rug: the replacement of merit by caste. Applying a new economic means test to determine the beneficiaries of the reservation scheme is stirring up another hornets' nest. Determining income levels or how the poverty line will be used for qualifying people for reservations will be a logistical nightmare. Even the Government doesn't know

whether the beneficiaries will be families or individuals.

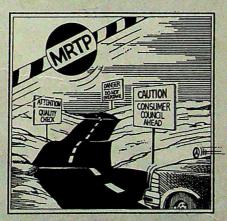
The fundamental issue, however, that still remains—and it is what the Supreme Court is now examining—is the legal validity of the decision to implement the Mandal Commission report. The statistical foundation of the report—the basis on which it arrived at caste formulations in the absence of a proper census or accurate data pertaining to the backward castes—has already come under blistering attack. But what the Supreme Court must now deal with is whether the Mandal report violated its own terms of reference: determining first of all the very desirability of reservations on the basis of empirical evidence.

Striking a Balance

HE Government's newly-issued ordinance amending the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP) is a step in the right direction because it seeks to free industry for expansion minus red tape while building new safeguards for the consumer. From now-with some exceptions-no prior approval will be required for the establishment of a new venture, expansion, amalgamation, merger, and appointment of directors. But these changes should not mean freedom to manipulate the market or defraud consumers.

The Government has done well to recognise the need for this balancing act. With this in mind, the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission has now been vested with additional powers. In its new watchdog role, the commission has been given jurisdiction over the public sector along with the power to police unfair trade practices in the real estate industry as well as false claims made by companies issuing new shares.

Consumer complaints against builders have been hultiplying rapidly every year with construction becomthem. And the law was vague on whether housing



constituted an MRTP activity. The Urban Development Ministry had proposed a law to govern this sector but it was put on the backburner after the builders proposed self-regulation. With the new amendment, consumers now have a forum to air their grievances.

Similarly, despite many instances of companies making false claims to lure investors for their public issues, the commission could not curtail this, since the provisions of the MRTP Act did not apply to shares not already in existence. Now a company can be ordered to

issue a fresh advertisement if the one issued earlier is found to be misleading.

And to put sharper teeth into its new bite, the commission can levy penalties of up to Rs 50 lakh for various offences. The Government should now concentrate on strengthening the infrastructure of the commission's tribunals that will examine these consumer complaints. For them to work, it is critical for both industry as well as consumers that the trials are conducted speedily, that there are no interminable time-lags between one hearing and the next. Early redressal of grievances is critical if the new system is to gain credibility and consumer acceptance.

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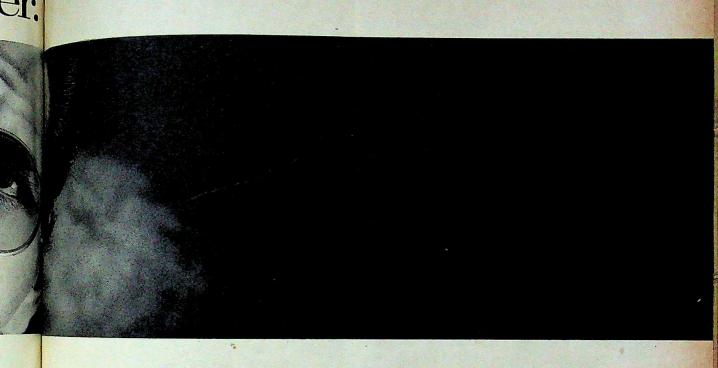
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Compatibility? It looks like conspiracy!

The 930X is available with IBM and EPSON ESC/P Emulations. Plus, it offers the unique option of an EMULATION card which makes it compatible with a host of other systems. Now isn't that taking compatibility a bit too far?

Well, now that you've heard the printable excerpts of the market reactions, it's time to contact your nearest Godrei Dealer for a live demo. Without fear, prejudice, or obligation.



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Extended Exile

• Dawood Ibrahim, the don from Dubai, is perhaps the most notorious of underworld characters from the subcontinent. And it's unlikely that the long arm of



justice will be able to get a grip on him for a while to come. Especially now that the Indian Embassy in Dubai has renewed Ibrahim's passport for another five years without even bothering to crosscheck with revenue intelligence headquarters in New Delhi.

Had it checked, it would have discovered that Ibrahim-who runs his mafialike operations in exile-has a string of criminal charges behind him. Involved in several cases of gold smuggling, he faces three detention orders at present. In fact, he was detained in 1984 along with 112 other offenders only to be later released on bail. He fled the country in 1986, following which a red alert was sounded for his arrest. Obviously, it wasn't loud enough for the embassy in Dubai though.

Now that the deportation threat no longer hangs over his head, Ibrahim can comfortably carry on watching one-day cricket matches and fraternising with glamorous film stars-for another five Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

years, at least. Even as his continue henchmen sweat it out in Bombay.

Weighty Writing

 His political weight may be diminishing. But that hasn't stopped Vishvjit P. Singh—regarded as the heaviest MP-from making the front page. He's now writing a weekly column for Bombay's Free Press Journal to keep himself in the public eye. The Doon School product's political career-tied to Sonia Gandhi's apron strings-has been under a cloud due to her reluctance to enter politics. So, he's joined other vanishing political stars like Mani Shanker Aiyar and taken to journalism to stay in the national glare. The infamous shouting brigade's member is now screaming from the rooftops that he's still around. So what if it's only through a

Cartoons by AJIT NINAN



lightweight like the Free Press Journal.

Flying High

 The maharaja is flying high again. Last fortnight, Civil Aviation Minister Madhavrao Scindia slid into the driver's seat-no, not the Congress(I)'s-and literally



winged his way from Delhi to Goa and back. Along the way, the minister chose to throw all rules and regulations to the winds. For, though Scindia-who was taking a party of journalists to the sun-soaked beaches for a travel agents' conference-has a licence to fly private planes, he certainly isn't authorised to fly large commercial aircraft.

Evidently, that hasn't stopped him in the least. He still confidently manned the aircraft alone during take-off and landing. The only time his hand seemed to slip from the cruise control button was while taxiing on the runway. That's when Scindia kept braking rather nervouslyperhaps realising that the new

course that he'd charted for himself wasn't entirely in keeping with his high office.

Grounded Chief

• The cars kept whizzing by on the road to the airport And the hapless passenger_ whose car had broken down-kept trying desperately to flag down a ride to catch his flight. Eventually, a two-wheeler screeched to a halt beside him.

The greying man with a briefcase in hand hopped on. and the scooterist drove to the airport at breakneck speed. Since the chances of making the flight were pretty slim, the scooterist insisted he see his pillion to the Airbus terminal. When the rider refused his offer with an effusive thanks, he gave him a calling card instead. And told the gentleman to produce the card in case he wasn't allowed to check in.



The driver happened to be an Indian Airlines superintend ing engineer. Sure enough. passenger grateful the cruised through all the checks and boarded the flight in the nick of time.

The next day, the pillion rider wrote a letter of gratitude to the helpful engineer. It was signed Air Marshal S.S. Ramdas, the chairman of Indian Airlines.

TAIL PIECE

Despite the Government's blandishments, NRIs are steadfastly refusing to ball out their mother country with fresh investments. Even worse, they continue to withdraw FCNR scheme deposits. This provoked a leading economist to crack: "NRI now stands for Non-Reliable Indians!"

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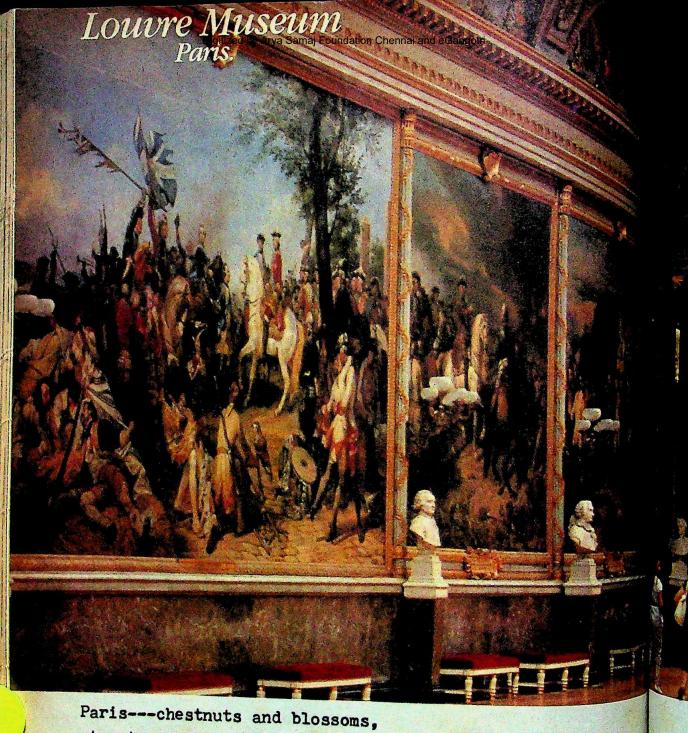
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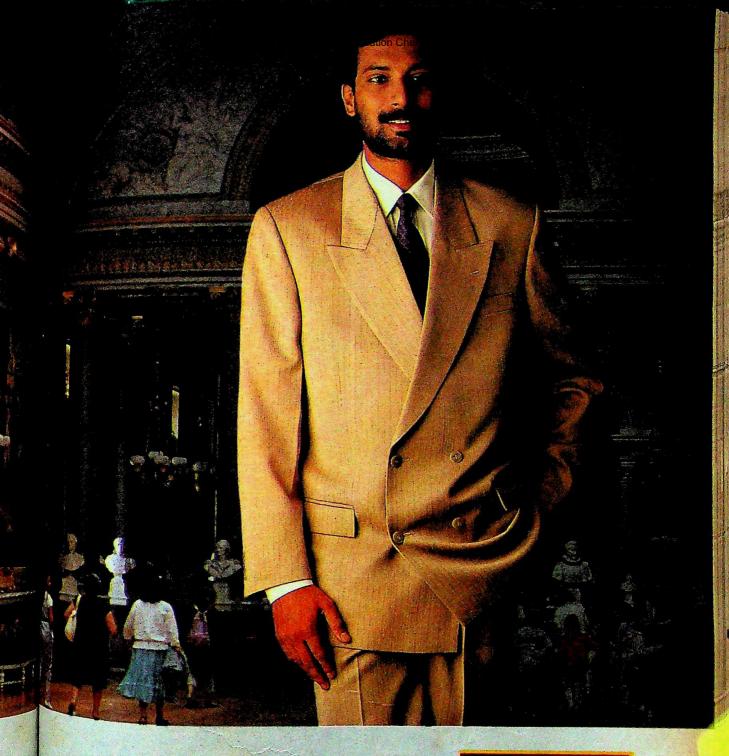


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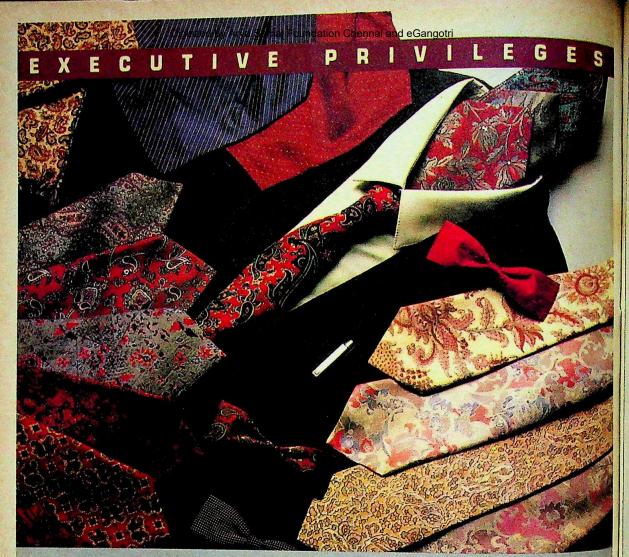


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 - ARUN SINGH, chairman, committee on defence expenditure, in Trishul, journal of Defence Services Staff College, Wellington
- Itake pride in getting MLAs to defect to my party. It is my hobby and my way of making politics lively. BHAJAN LAL in The Telegraph
- The prime minister is in Delhi, but we are condemned under PWG threats not to work in the fields of the Rao family.
 - An irate villager of Bangara, the ancestral home of P.V. NARASIMHA RAO, in Probe
- Let's give the Government another 100 days.
 - V.P. SINGH in The Week
- We do not enjoy killing people. ■ ANUP CHETIA, ULFA general secretary, announcing extension of deadline for release of hostages, in The Telegraph
- Every third housewife in Bombay will show positive HIV virus by 1996. DR A.S. PAINTAL, former director general of the Indian Council of Medical Research, in The Sunday Observer
- Many astrologers in Moscow told me my husband is still alive.
- NELLI GRISCHENKO, wife of Soviet engineer claimed to have been killed by ULFA
- Oh, he's busy planning the strategy for the central councillor elections in A close associate of RAJEEV GOSWAMI, denying reports of the Dusy president missing from the agitation, having sold out to the Government
- This time we'll finish the Government rather than finishing ourselves.
 - RAJEEV GOSWAMI in The Sunday Pioneer
- The girl tasted so good. ■ MAJHUHU MURMU, a tribal from Jamui in Bihar, accused of cannibalism, in The Independent
- I am thinking of a comeback.

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- P.T. USHA in Sportsworld
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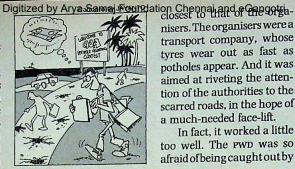
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HITTING THE POT

■ Pointed photographs in newspapers are passe. Pothole-counting contests, to shake the PWD out of its lassitude, are in. At least in Ponda, Goa. A contest was organised recently to tot up the number of potholes in the town. The winner would be the one whose tally was



nisers. The organisers were a transport company, whose tyres wear out as fast as potholes appear. And it was aimed at riveting the attention of the authorities to the scarred roads, in the hope of a much-needed face-lift.

In fact, it worked a little too well. The PWD was so afraid of being caught out by the public that it began to repair the link roads before the big day arrived. But before it could get to the main roads, the contest was on, and the potholes were amply evident. A young man bagged the top prize of Rs 150 for counting to 365—the closest to the organisers' tally of 375. A hole-in-one indeed.

BATHING BOUNTY

■ If lotuses can bloom in mud, why can pearls not be found in a pond? A young businessman, tired of the pressures of his profession, wanted to take a quick dip before putting his nose to the daily grind. So off he went, one morning last fortnight, to a bathing tank near Agartala. And what did he find there? No, not a frog, waiting to be kissed into royalty. But a cluster of gleaming oysters, usually found in deep sea waters.

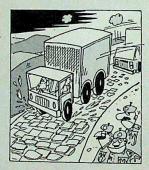
Thinking he had acquired the deficient ocular capacity of a particularly myopic barnyard owl, he opened the oysters. And what should he find but



plum pearls, just waiting to be picked. As news travelled, people came in from all around, to ensnare some booty themselves. But luck never strikes the same place twice. Our young man ended up as the only winner, and that too, all in a day's bath. Enough to make our hero retire to the wilds for the rest of his life.

SOBER DEEDS

■ Mount Road in Madras must never have been so high. Last week, 40,000 sachets of arrack were seized from a lorry and had to be disposed of-much as the city's policemen would have wanted the liquor to end up down their gullets. But they must have been



daunted by the chief minister's diktat to make the state a sober one. So out tumbled all the sachets on to the street, to be periodically mowed by the speeding tyres of cruising vehicles. In a scene that would have done Dickens' Tale of Two Cities proud, a crowd collected around the road, punctuating the demise of each sachet

with hearty applause.

Involving about 20 policemen, Operation Arrack went on till midnight. Any day better than dumping the packs in the Cooum river-a technique triedout earlier-only to be recovered by enterprising urchins and sold in the open market. The invention of the wheel certainly has its uses.

GOING BUST

■ If Mahatma Gandhi weren't dead, he wouldn't be a very happy man. Because the apostle of peace's life-sized bronze statue, located on an artificial island in a 10-acre lake in Patiala. has to be protected by gunwielding guards. And to

prevent vandals from displaying their graphic graffiti on the Mahatma, scores of guards have to walk around the pedestal all day long. In fact, in the mid-'60s. Naxalites managed to inflict some damage on the great man's statue.

But the security comes at a price: the state adminis-



tration has already doled out Rs 25 lakh in salaries for the men ringing the Mahatma. Allowing the Raj relic, Edward VI, to continue on the pedestal would perhaps have worked out cheaper for the state. After all, in this age of budget cuts, who can afford to spend so much on a man of metal?

SNAKE IN THE CLASS

■ Suchisthestate of West Bengal's education system. And of the unfortunate students victimised by it. A tutor of a fifth standard student-given the arduous task of teaching the child the language of Saxon superiority-came out of the



experience much worse for the wear, with her biology befuddled. While explaining the difference between birds, reptiles and mammals, the tutor gave the 11-year-old a lesson in biology-made-simple.

While birds flew, reptiles were smooth-skinned. And mammals-well, they were hairy and nursed their young, she said.

And then came the big question. Asked the tutor. "So tell me, which group do you belong to?" The child pondered the deeply existential question for a while The answer: "Madam I think I am a reptile." That's called affinity with animals.

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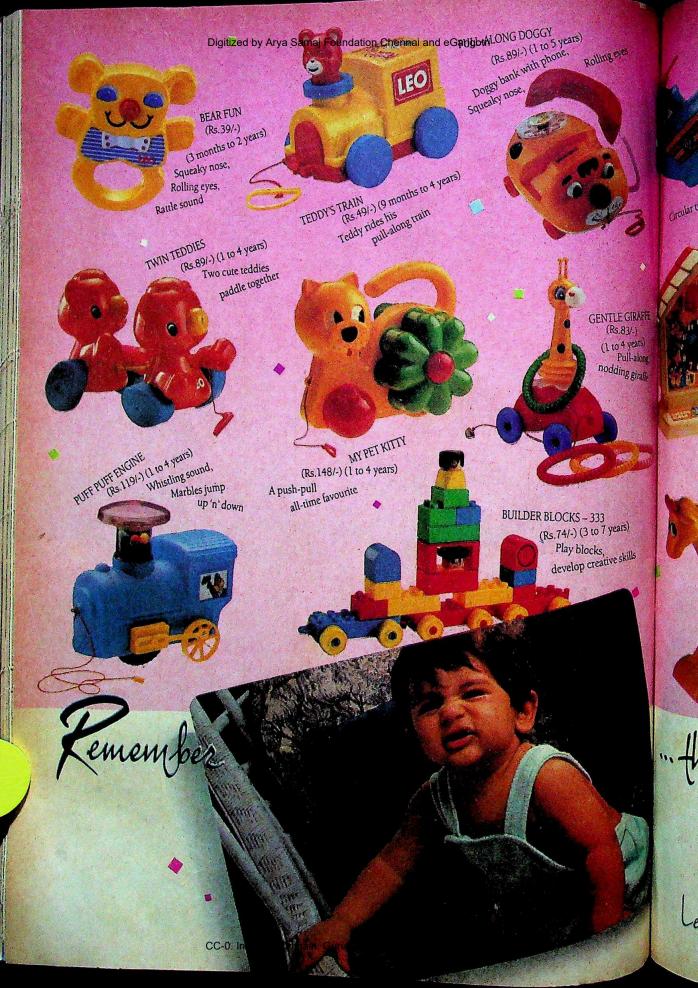
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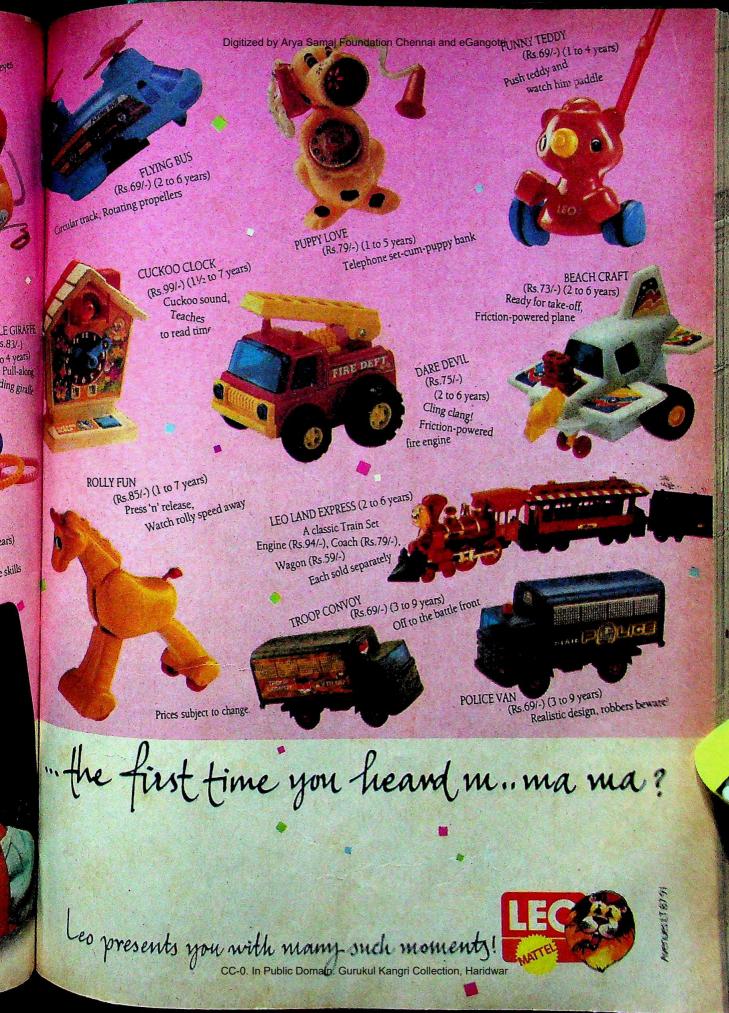


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The Indian team now has probably the strongest batting line-up in the world. With key batsmen in great form, chasing a target may be a question of temperament and nerves.

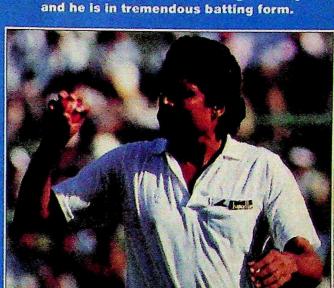
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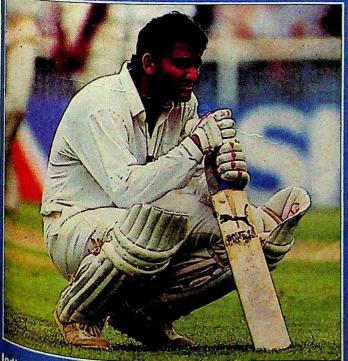


Sachin Tendulkar, 18, has emerged as cricket's most exciting find.



At 32, Kapil Dev is still bowling steadily

Sanjay Manjrekar, 25, is now among India's most competent batsmen.



Indian Skipper Mohammed Azharuddin, 28, has had a Suggestion of the county cricket. Successful run in recent English county cricket.



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"What we really need are several good bowlers who can get an opposition out. In one-day cricket, it may not be necessary, but in test matches, it is crucial."

ABBAS ALI BAIG, Indian team manager for Australian tour

match one-day international series. The Indian team then leaves for Australia in mid-November where in between five Test matches, they will vie with Australia and West Indies in the Benson and Hedges World Series.

Abbas Ali Baig, Indian team manager for the Australian tour, says all this is really a run-up for the World Cup. Beginning in February, the Cup, which comes once in four years, will have eight nations competing for the title of world champion on Australia's bouncy wickets.

It would do more than just that. For many of the cricketers who have dominated the world stage in the past decade, it may well be their last hurrah. Imran Khan, Kapil Dev. Desmond Haynes, Ian Botham. Allan Border. Players who have constantly rewritten cricketing records during their careers but may not be around when the next Cup comes.

For the nation too, the cricketing bonanza would be a record of sorts. At the end of 150 days, the team would have played in a minimum of 25 of the 61 one-day internationals to be held for the

four major international tournaments. A phenomenal average of a one-day cricket match every week!

7 HAT makes the coming oneday goldmine fascinating is, as 'Tiger' Pataudi, former Indian captain, points out: "Almost all the main teams are evenly balanced." The Australians undoubtedly have the most compact team but are not considered invincible. While the West Indies has been considerably weakened by the departure of such stalwarts as Viv Richards, Gordon Greenidge and Malcolm Marshall, they still have a battery of lethal speedsters. And under the new skipper Richie Richardson they are still a team to reckon with.

The performance of other major teams has been as enigmatic. England is currently riding a crest after having convincingly beaten the West Indies in one-day internationals recently. But it is still plagued with problems of finding a well-rounded side. And the Pakistanis have good all-round talent but its stalwarts are beginning to show their age

At home, what's kicked interest in the season ahead is that after many vears, the Indian team has probably the strongest batting line-up in the world. In Karachi, Javed Burki, chairman of Pakistan's national cricket selection committee, says appreciatively: "Your batsmen are simply superb."

Though the vacuum left by Gavaskar is yet to be filled, India now has four opening batsmen to choose from the in-form Ravi Shastri, Navjot Singh Sidhu, W.V. Raman and Manoj Prabhakar. With Mohammed Azharuddin Sanjay Manjrekar and Sachin Tendulkar in tremendous nick, the middle order can weather any early collapse And for the slog overs there is always the indomitable Kapil Dev.

In fact, under skipper Mohammed Azharuddin the team has built up? formidable reputation. Though unlucky to lose the English series 1-0 last October, the team won respect with its scorching batsmanship. And in the earlier Texaco One-Day Trophy sur-

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Indian team probables at the fitness camp in Delhi: a farce

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A Sizeable Challenge

India's major rivals have strong teams. But barring Australia, the rest face problems in several key areas of the game.

PAKISTAN

PLAYERS TO WATCH



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IMRAN KHAN Captain

WAGAR YOUNUS **Fast Bowler**

SALIM MALIK Batsman

STRENGTHS

- Overall: Good all-round team of players
- Pace bowlers are accurate and penetrative
- Attacking batsmen in the middle order

WEAKNESSES

- No depth in batting if key players fail
- Imran clearly ageing and doesn't bowl that well
- Fitness of many of the players suspect

AUSTRALIA

PLAYERS TO WATCH







DEAN JONES Batsman

MERV HUGHES Pace Bowler

ALLAN BORDER Captain

STRENGTHS

- Compact and extremely well-knit team
- Shrewd and intelligent captain
- Key players are in very good form Attacking pace bowlers that provide results

WEAKNESSES

Fitness problems for some of the bowlers Middle-order batsmen tend to be shaky

WEST INDIES

STRENGTHS

- Good pace bowlers who maintain steady line
- Young side with tremendous talent

WEAKNESSES

- Loss of key players hurting performance
- No depth in batting unlike in the past
- Inexperienced and immature side
- Rebuilding team will take several years

PLAYERS TO WATCH







BRIAN LARA Batsman

CARL HOOPER All-rounder

C. AMBROSE **Pace Bowler**

ENGLAND

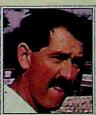
STRENGTHS

- On the whole, highly professional side
- Gooch, Smith in form and among runs

WEAKNESSES

- Promising players failing to come good
- No good bowling to get opponents out
- Fielding suspect; fitness problems
- Will take time to rebuild team

PLAYERS TO WATCH



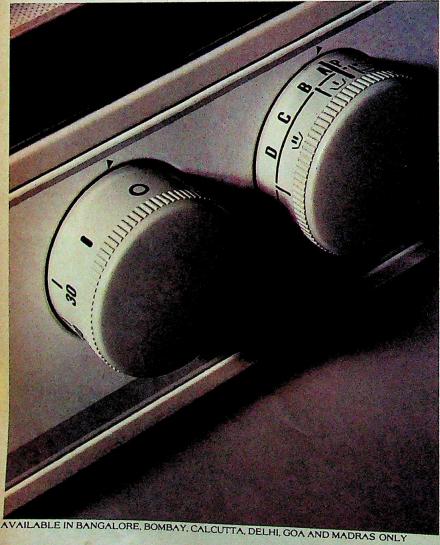




G. GOOCH Captain

ROBIN SMITH Batsman

P. DEFRIETAS Pace Bowler



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"All the teams now are around the same level. No one can be beaten easily. So it's going to be a good battle to watch out there in the middle."

M.A.K. PATAUDI, former Indian captain

prised the English with a brilliant charge that saw it winning both the matches and snatching the cup.

Most experts now rate the team highly. West Indies team manager Deryck Murray says: "Everyone's going to be watching the Indian team closely for the one-day matches. It has exciting batsmen, superbfielders and it's a young and fit team." And in Sydney the legendary Bob Simpson, now the Australian cricket team's coach, adds: "The public here is looking forward to India's visit. The Indians are considered pretty tough nuts. And India has a habit of playing well against us!"

But, these comments paper over a serious flaw in the Indian line-up: bowling. The team's bowling lacks both genuine pace and spin. Kapil is clearly ageing and unfortunately has no successor to his speed. Prabhakar, Chetan Sharma or even new find I. Srinath are at best restrictive. And on a placid wicket like Sharjah, they can easily be smashed around.

ORSE, India is likely to go to Australia without the services of a genuine spinner. All its finds in the '80s: Maninder Singh, Narendra Hirwani, L. Sivaramakrishnan and Arshad Ayub flattered only to deceive. Their replacements like Anil Kumbe and Venkatapathi Raju have yet o mature. The magic of Indian spin bowling seems to be a thing of the past.

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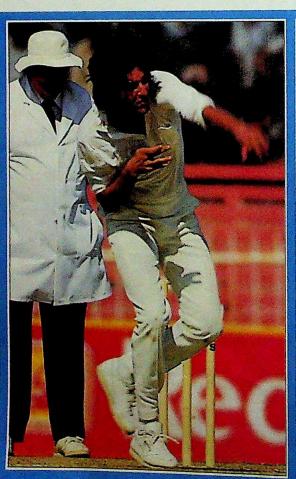
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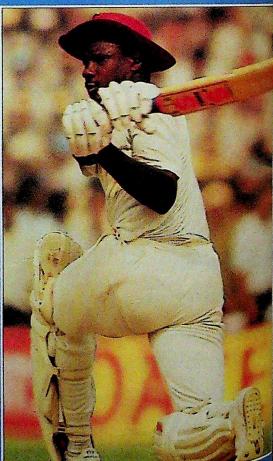
wheels" in the 22 pro names, a

Anoth

Stalwarts like Kapil Dev are disabpointed even with the new crop of bowlers whom they feel lack total commitment. Kapil bemoans the fact that his juniors spend too much time watching slow-motion replays of bowling on television rather than practising the art themselves. Says he: "They are not willing to go through the grind. At this rate we are not going to find good bowlers."

Abbas Ali Baig sees the lack d penetrative bowling as a key factor that





Pakistan's Wasim Akram and West Indies' Richie Richardson: striking form

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hamper India's performance. Says be. "While we may be able to pile up a buge total, we don't have the bowlers to bowl an opposition out." Though in one-day matches it may not be all that mortant, in Test cricket India is unikely to win a match unless the bowlers are able to come good.

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Two other areas could create problems for the Indian team. The question of who should be the wicket keeper is yettobesettled. Syed Kirmani's valiant efforts to come back into the team have come a cropper. The choice is still between Kiran More and partime keeper Chandrakant Pandit—unfortunately, neither inspires confidence.

Another area that the team looks suspect in is fielding. Its m-fielding looks good with Azharuddin stalking in the overs, Manjrekar at shortleg and Tendulkar at gully. But what the team lacks is good outfielders. The new crop like Raman and Sidhu lack the

sure-footedness and accuracy of returns like those of Srikkanth and Madan Lal. And in one-day matches this lacuna may cost the team dearly.

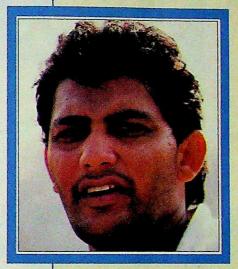
With a long build-up before the World Cup, India hopes to plug its weak Moints. Union Minister Madhavrao Scindia who is the president. Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), says: The exacting season ahead should give us a chance to discover talent." Ashok Mankad, the Indian team manager for the Sharjah cup as well as the Pakistan lour, is using it as an opportunity both for training and experimenting with the Indian team. "In golf, we call this grooving your swing. You can keep doing it repetitively till you perfect your stroke." Says Mankad, who spends many of his evenings practising his drives.

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Pataudi sees "wheels within the 22 probables had a host of new hames, a surprise exclusion was Dilip

AZHARUDDIN

"It's a tough task ahead"



INDIAN captain Mohammed Azharuddin, 28, spoke to Associate Editor RAJ CHENGAPPA. Excerpts:

The season ahead:

Tough task, boss. It's a long one and not going to be an easy job for us.

Assessment of the team:

We are better at batting. But I think along the way we are going to pick up some very good bowlers, especially the faster ones. I don't think we are going to have a problem with our bowling.

On Indian fielding:

Our fielding has improved considerably. We have youngsters who are very quick and fielding is a very important aspect in one-day matches. So it's going to help considerably.

Rival teams:

In terms of rating, it would be the Australians first, followed by Pakistan, the West Indies and England in that order. The Aussies are playing on home ground and have the edge. But one-day is such a game that any side can win.

Own performance:

Now I'm just doing well. I'm quite happy.

Captaincy:

It's not put any pressure on me. Not really. I hope.

Vengsarkar, former Indian skipper. Vengsarkar has been in excellent form during the domestic season. But the selectors' reason for dropping him was that "he is a better Test player".

Another exclusion that raised a storm was that of the dashing opener K. Srikkanth, who has had a lean patch ever since he lost his captaincy two years ago. Selectors' reason: he lacks consistency. Naren Tamhane, the selection committee chairman, says: "We have chosen a good mix of experience and youth. And in doing so have kept performance, fitness and competitive spirit in mind. We want to select the best team possible."

HE surfeit of one-day cricket is likely to adversely affect the team's performance in the Test series Down Under. That's because one-day cricket is more like a 100-metre dash while playing a Test match is a bit like running a marathon. Both require different strategies and temperament. Players may find it difficult to make the mental and stylistic switch. Says Wadekar: "There are too many tournaments bunched together. And the players are not going to be psychologically fit to meet the challenge of Test cricket or the World Cup."

Scindia does admit that the board was forced to squeeze the Pakistan oneday series into the already crowded itinerary to save it from financial ruin. With very little of cricket coming to India in the past year, the board's Rs 1 crore budget had gone perilously into the red. It had gone so broke that there was even talk of dipping into the benevolent fund set aside for players. The Pakistan series would net for the board itself an additional revenue of Rs 30 lakh that would cut its losses to almost zero. The only concession: to prevent the players from getting "homesick" they lopped off a month from the Australian Test match series.

It is not only the Indian team that has problems. Neighbouring Pakistan may be considered as among the best allround teams but it too is beset with difficulties. Key players like Imran Khan and Javed Miandad are past their prime. Imran, in fact, is considered more for his batsmanship and captaincy than for his fiery bowling spells. Much depends on Salim Malik, Rameez Raja and had Ahmed who on their day can slaughter any bowling attack.

In pace bowling, however, Pakistan is still tops. Imran rates Waqar Yunus as the most penetrative bowler in the work! today. And Wasim Akram too can be deadly. In fact, the Pakistan paces



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"The public is looking forward to the Indian team's visit to Australia. Indians are always popular and are considered pretty tough nuts to crack. And they do well against us!"

women. Names of Bombay

stars, Amrita Singh and

Madhuri Dixit, and even

tennis heartthrob Gabriela

Sabatini have been linked

with him. "What to do

about media?" Shastri

once fretted to me with

justification. "They seem

more interested in my ac-

tivities off the field than on

it." Married now, Shastri

knows this season could

finish him or clear the way

for the captain's slot he has

BOB SIMPSON, Australian team coach

ability to swing the ball is legendary and makes them effective one-day bowlers. And they have depth, with Aqib Javed coming first change and Imran as reserve. As Burki, chief of selectors, says: "What we lack in batting, we make up in bowling. In the World Cup, we are hopeful but we are not expecting too much from our team.'

However, for the Sharjah cup, the

Pakistani team is rated as a hot favourite. Apart from the fact that the crowd roots for them, their bowlers are still effective on the docile Sharjah wicket. And, as Burki points out, Pakistan has developed a "winning habit" that is hard to defeat. Says he: "The law of averages might point to an Indian win. But I would still put my money on Pakistan."

A team that not many are going to put their money on easily is that of the talented but raw West Indians. With giants like Richards, Marshall and Haynes pulling out, manager Murray says: "It's going to be difficult to fill up their shoes overnight. We have a lot of work to do in between." Though have be captain's

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The Splendid Six

By SHEKHAR GUPTA

AMPLE the six Indians who will make the headlines. one way or the other, as the season gets going. Ashes to Ashes,/dust to dust./If Gibbs can't get you,/Sobers must. Indians could fittingly modify the Caribbean doggerel: If Kapil can't get you./A century's a must. Such is India's

dependence on his tiring knees and shoulders. Sarfraz Nawaz, that menacing, gangly, wizard unparalleled in the the art of swing bowling and craft of Punjabi profanity, once impressed upon me the significance of Kapil's origins. His forefathers, said Sarfraz, came from Sahiwal, now in Pakistan and known for its bulls. "They don't make them stronger anywhere else." he chuckled.

Kapil would hate the simile, for at 32, the flesh may be reluctant but the spirit is there. Richard Hadlee's 431 Test wickets is one he should want before retiring into moneymaking from his syndication

business, as well as from shrimp farming. $FOR\ a\ manof Ravi\ Shankar\ Shastri's talents, it is\ a\ tragedy$

coveted since he made his debut as a skinny, 6 ft 3in 17-year-old who could bowlabil. bat a bit, but was dismissed as a Gavaskar lackey. THE rawest recruit in Indian cricket's Maratha Regimentis already a veteran of sorts. It takes a batsman of Sachin Tendulkar's talents to draw awed admiration from a bowlet whom he has just hit for four sixes in an over. "Yeh chhokre w

dekhna tum. Yeh aisa-waisa batsman nahin banega, Gavas kar ya Zed (Zaheer Abbas) jaisa. Is sey bowler bhagenge (Watch this boy. He will make no ordinary bats man, but one bowlers will run away from), says Abdul Qadir. For a boy o 18 with a five-figure sal ary, a car, an enviable collec-

The "baby" must wait for the ball to come to him



The ageing bull is set

for the big charge

that his career should be punctuated with more

question marks than signs of exclamation. Here's a

professional who bats right-handed, and then turns

his left arm over for some useful spin bowling. But it is

his reputation for ambidexterity off the field that's his

undoing. He has scored centuries against heavy odds

and yet Indian crowds have booed him.

Shastri's problem is his reputation with

have been a natural choice for the captain's job, the selectors decided to experiment with the much younger

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The team also has a good crop of youngsters spearheaded by batsman Brian Lara who is considered hot property these days. Phil Simmons is back after a prolonged lay-off. And among bowlers, the penetrating pacer Ian Bishop has fully recovered from a back injury. And new find Andie Cummins, the Barbados fast bowler, is highly promising. But it may take a couple of years for the team to regain its former stature.

Though talented, the English team too has its problems. Skipper Graham Gooch seems indomitable and Robin Smith solid, but the batting line-up is still in the woods. Graeme Hick and Mike Atherton have showed tremendous prowess but have lacked consistency. The team's real problem, however, is bowling. For the recent series, they even had to recall Ian Botham, who did make the difference. Says team manager Micky Stewart: "We are going through a stage ofre-establishing as a team. It's really like an introductory process and we've got plenty of hard work ahead of us.'

HAT the Australians have already done. Despite failures by certain players, they stuck by them in the past couple of years. The result: the Australians are probably the most wellknit and professional side in the world. Skipper Allan Border continues to lead with great intelligence. Dean Jones, Datralia is going to be hard to beat. While the arithmetic might work on paper, once the game gets going it's going to be extremely difficult to predict a winner. The one-dayers demand fitness of an extraordinary standard. It's full of quirks with a rush of blood by a batsman costing a match. Or a great catch, a run out or some daredevil strokeplay proving to be the turning point. As always, it generates loads of adrenalin-pumping excitement. And the next five months hold promise of

plenty of that dynamite stuff.

good batting nick. With Bruce Reid fit,

Craig McDermott striking a good rhythm

and the moustachioed Merv Hughes as

menacing as ever, the Australian

bowlers are firing all cylinders. Says

Simpson: "We are going to be stronger

than ever." And on home ground, Aus-

vid Boon and Geoff Marsh are in More.

Threatened by rivals, the joker in the pack has a serious problem

tion of compact discs and lots of cash and runs already to his account, Sachin is remarkably modest. I remember seeing him walk up to Wasim Akram in Sialkot and say: "Aapko koyi kaise maarega. Aap to itni achchi bowling karte hain." (Who can ever hit you? You bowl so well.) That, after he had ripped Waqar Younus and Zakir Khan apart mercilessly. How far he goes will depend on howseriously he takes the advice of Sunil Gavaskar, his most indulgent fan: "You are doing everything right. But relax. Don't go for the ball. Let the ball come to

A question mark the size of his oversized keeper's gloves hangs over the future of

Kiran "Jockey" More, stuck in a horrendously bad patch. Actually, you can't really blame the guy. Given the Carloons by AJIT NINAN and MANOJIT DATTA

pedestrian Indian bowling, he must spend twice as much time crouching behind the stumps as any other wicket keeper in the world. But he is a fighter in the doughtiest Marathi tradition. Also, he is the life of the party who keeps the team in splits either with his rendering of conversations between Madan Lal and Javed Miandad-in English-or of Imran Khan's very personal compliments to the fielders who happen to misfield shots off his bowling. But challenged for the keeper's job by two strong claimants, More knows this season is serious business.

THE oddball among the flamboyant bunch is the most consistent of them all. Sanjay Manjrekar. Quiet, reticent and so utterly harmless. Until someone drops one short of a length outside the off-stump. The bat flashes in a vicious arc and it is rare that he is caught in the slips. This classicist hates comparisons. Even with his famous father Vijay. He insists he is an original. Ideally a Test-match type who also wants to carve himself a niche in the one-day game that goes against the grain of all his technical perfection. But he has to learn the nimble art of stealing the short single, and run well between the wickets.

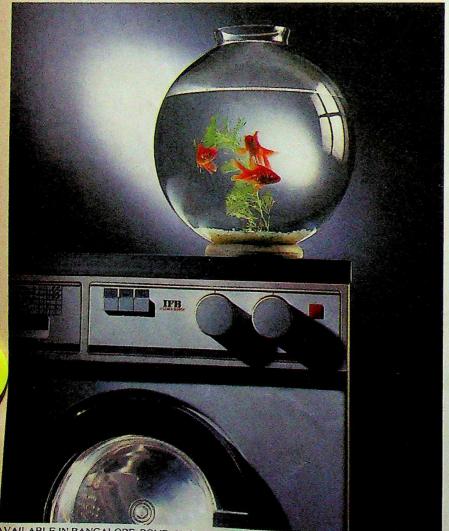
LIKE Kapil, Azhar abhors alcohol, tobacco, womanising and the defensive prod on the cricket pitch. Some compare him with Gundappa Viswanath—Azhar has as quicksilver a pair

of wrists as the original little master. Others see in him the shades of Zaheer Abbas: he has that hallmark cover drive. But Azhar is an original. A bit rap and a bit raga. One moment a virtuoso, the other a merry slogger. Watch him lean into that square drive. Watch him in a slow-motion replay as the ball, on the rise, hits the middle, the wrists roll to give that extra impetus and the cover fielder applauds rather than bothering to the chase. The problem is, even before the applause dies down, Azhar could well be essaying the paddle-sweep. his invention of an instrument of suicide.



At times virtuoso, at times slogger, he is an enigma

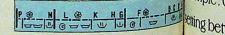




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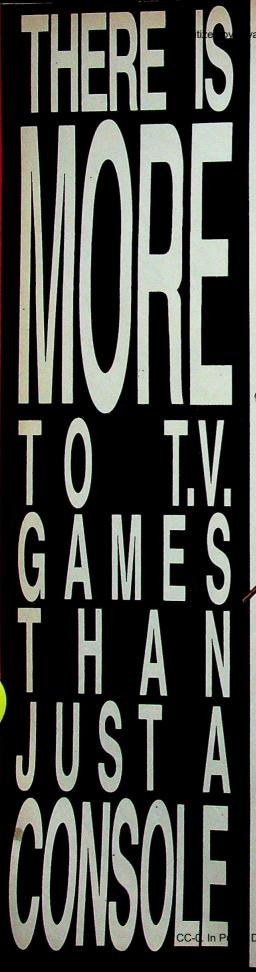
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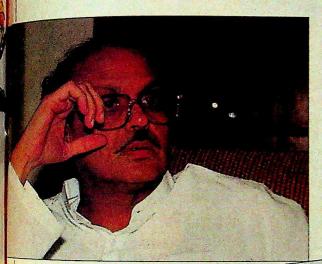
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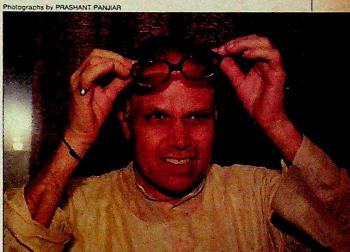
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Suspicious Violations

While there is no clinching evidence to prove that a tantrik's request to V.P. Singh stalled action against 10 offenders in 1985, investigations reveal serious lapses.





By SHEFALI BHIMAL

SSORTED swamis and gurus have been suspected from time to time of influencing the Government's decisions. And charges are flying-of all places in Parliament—that a tantrik was involved in stalling punitive action against 10 economic offenders who otherwise might have found themselves in jail.

The charge has been levelled in a letter to Finance Minister Manmohan Singh by Congress(I) MP K. Ramamurthy. And raised as a special mention in the recently-concluded Parliament session by the Congress(I)'s Ratnakar Pandey. He wants a parliamentary probe and a cBI inquiry. He alleges that in the 1985 case, the then finance minister V.P. Singh and his officials conspired to drop charges against the COFEPOSA offendamentary properties.

lenders. The issue will be taken up in Parliament's next session.

V.P. Singh's supporters dismiss the raking up of an old affair as an attempt to malign him. Nonetheless, an independent investigation, based on the

Acces wound your me construct of the con

Government's own secret files, indicates that while there is no direct evidence to prove that the tantrik influenced the outcome of the case, there were serious irregularities which raise doubts about the prosecution proceedings. And especially during a Singh, Paramahansa and (left) the crucial letter

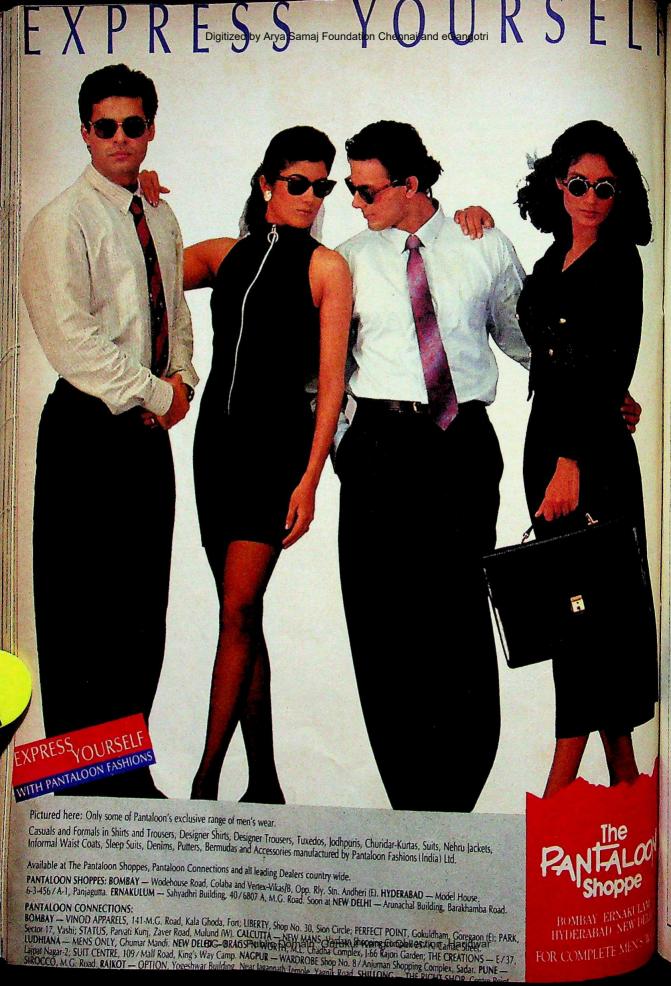
period marked by stringent crackdown against economic offenders.

The story opens in August 1985. The Directorate of Enforcement, headed by the crackdown specialist Bhure Lal, unearth incriminating evidence against an 11-member havala ring run by a group of Afghan nationals of Indian origin. The racket had continued till April 1985 and between April-December 1980 alone toted up transactions of Rs 16 crore.

Consequently, the directorate recommends detention of all the members—except the ringleader S. Didar Singh who is

dead by then—under Section 3(1) of COFEPOSA. It's cleared on September 19 by the Central Screening Committee comprising Bhure Lal, DIG (CBI) P.C. Srivastava and R. Laxman, a Law Ministry official. The detaining authority signed the orders on November 18.

From here on the case becomes



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curiouser. Enter the Delhi tantrik Dr Ramesh Paramahansa. He writes a letter to V.P. Singh on November 19 the date is changed, shoddily, to December 27—with the request to "revoke cofeposa orders against Laxman Goplani" as the case is fabricated. A similar request is made on behalf of an lmam, Mohd A. Haifiji. Goplani belonged to the Didar Singh ring and was also accused of under-invoicing exports. Raids at his residence had led to the seizure of foreign currency.

But mysteriously, detention is delayed, enabling the accused to go un-

derground. The directorate's explanations: one lakh photostat copies had to be made of the annexures to detention orders: to prevent premature leakage. the 10 had to be detained together but two of them were expected back in India only in early January; and, finally, they had gone underground.

Thereupon, the directorate recommends a review. Surprisingly, the Review Committee. constituted without any legal authority, also has Bhure Lal on it. The committee merely passes on the matter to the Government suggesting it could drop the matter. "if the delay could not be properly explained to advisory boards or court".

The Law Ministry, when consulted, opines: "If the detention order had not been served, the question of its revocation did not arise." Further, "non-service of a detention order within a reasonable time affected its validity".

Subsequently, the Central Economic Intelligence Bureau, under the Revenue Department, on March 12.



Bhure Lal: eye of the storm

GROSS IRREGULARITIES

- A three-month delay in executing detention orders-quarry escapes.
- Committee instituted to review case has no legal authority.
- Action not initiated against the offenders as COFEPOSA absconders.
- Evidence considered sufficient to start prosecution becomes inadequate later despite officials remaining the same. The case is dropped.
- The tantrik's letter of November 19, 1985 is shown as being received by the ministry on March 12, 1986, after the crucial decision has been taken.

recommends non-execution of detention orders. The reason: "We have no evidence to show that any attempt was made to get these orders executed. It is likely that the court will hold the detaining authority is not serious." Besides, "the documents do not pinpoint live links of illegal activities". But the same evidence was earlier found

sufficient for going ahead in the prosecution. The note adds that action may be taken under FERA. Two days later V.P. Singh puts his seal on it.

The most serious questions now are: Why was the customary alert not sounded and action initiated against the accused as absconders under COFEPOSA. Why were they let off the hook on weak technical grounds? Wasn't it presumptuous to conclude that the delay could not be explained?

When confronted by INDIA TODAY, Bhure Lal maintains that the case was decided purely on merit and charges of

> irregularity are baseless. He also denies he ever met any tantrik. notwithstanding Dr Paramahansa's claim to the contrary.

As for V.P. Singh, he cannot even recall the case. The allegations, he says, "are made by people who have been accusing me of something or the other for the past four years. I do not have to prove my credentials as one who took strong action against economic offenders." On the tantrik. Singh comments: "Who's he?"

Paramahansa, however, is effusive about their links that go back to 1981 when V.P. Singh was chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. He had met Goplani when asked by a devotee, Says he: "I was convinced of Goplani's in-

tegrity and hence requested V.P. Singh to revoke the order." The tantrik proved wrong on Goplani's integrity who was detained in 1988 at the Indira Gandhi International Airport for smuggling gold.

Clearly then, the irregularities justify the cause for concern expressed in Parliament.

RAMESH PARAMAHANSA

Dubious Past

IKE many other modern-day gurus. Delhi-based Dr Ramesh Paramahansa too boasts of connections in high places. And he too has a controversial background. His name has figured in 1985 and 1986 on the IB's list of undesirables.

Heis no illiterate, having secured a Ph.D. in Tantrik Studies from the BHU. At one time, initially, he was close to the interim prime minister.

Gulzari Lal Nanda. He worked under Nanda when he headed the Institute of Psychic and Spiritual Research. But later, he acquired the institute's

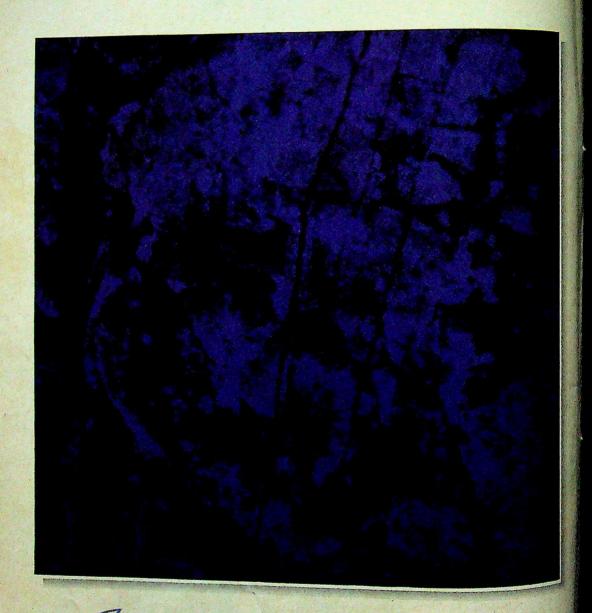
building situated on prime land. He also runs the Tantra Foundation in Vasant Vihar. for which he claims donations come from abroad, including the US and Pakistan.

He is a bit of a mayerick, and twice contested elections. against Rajiv Gandhi from Amethi in 1989 and 1991, under the banner of Janata Congress Party, which he floated in his son's name. The tantrik says he met V.P.

Singh in North Block when he took over as finance minister. "I told him the place was inappropriate for him. for there were miscreants around him." And V.P. Singh, the tantrik claims, did him a favour by bailing out Laxman Goplani.

-SHEFALI BHIMAL





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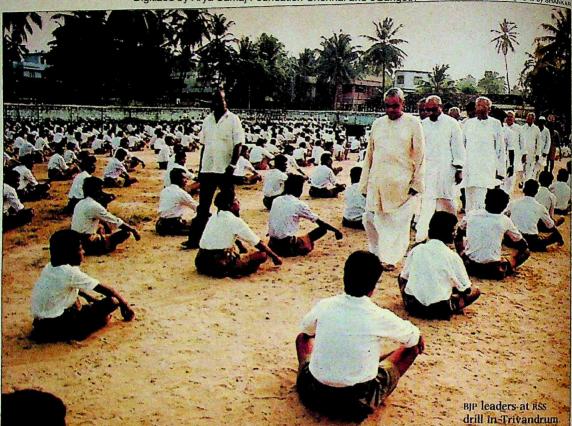
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BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY

Staking Out the South

The party's recent meeting at Trivandrum was the first step in its campaign to gain a firm foothold in the four southern states.

By ANAND VISWANATHAN

ITH many parts of the north already in the bag, the BJP is now waiting for the electoral conveyer belt to deliver the four southern states to its doorstep. Actually there is less of waiting and more of quiet preparation to firmly plant the saffron seed in the south.

The speed is calculatedly gradual, . and in characteristic BJP style, the strategy long term. As party Vice-President S.S. Bhandari says: "We don't want to impose ourselves on the people. Let them decide." The first states to be ploughed will be Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The choice of Trivandrum for the party's two-day national executive meeting last fortnight was deliberate. As leader of the Opposi-

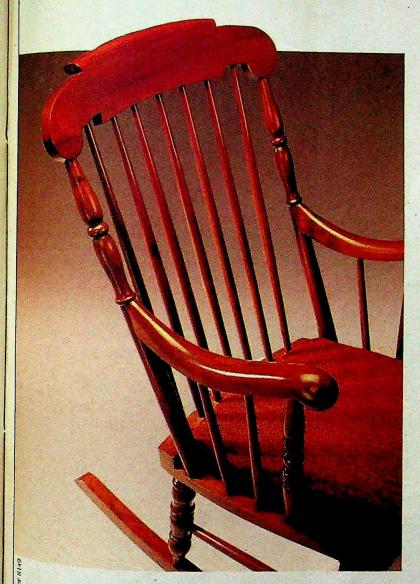
tion in the Lok Sabha L.K. Advani says: "We want to concentrate on areas where we are indeed weak. In Bangalore, our meeting could have turned into a victory celebration."

In fact, the meeting was more a post-mortem of the party's failure to make a dent in the southern armour in the recent elections. The emphasis was on honing its strategy for long-term conquest. The party high command's inability to bolster state units with monetary or moral support came in for criticism. And the conclusion that the party came to: if it wants to win even local elections, it has to shed its northern Hindutva hide. Says a BJP leader from Kerala, where the party hopes to cash in on disaffection with communism: "All of us agreed that issue-wise and cadre-wise, the BJP is viewed as a

north Indian party." With the south less riven by communal rifts and no national-level leader, the party marketing experts will have to think of a different package for its hardsell. From the millennium of Hindu resurrection. the focus for the south may shift to the dream of national governance. As Andhra Pradesh BJP chief and now author of the party's southern screenplay, Venkaiah Naidu, says: "The question is, how will the people accept us as a government-in-waiting?

Clearly, it will be an uphill task. The party managed only four seats in Karnataka and one in Andhra Pradesh "For this, the ice has to be broken in the no-chance states," points out Vajpayee. Naidu's plan of action, coauthored by General Secretary Pramod Mahajan, is three-pronged:

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► The national executive will pass resolutions on problems in the south.

▶ Senior national leaders will tour the four states every month.

► BIPMPs will raise issues vital to the south in Parliament. Some of these are: the Vijayanagar steel plant in Karnataka, the Neyveli Thermal Station (Stage II) in Tamil Nadu, and the Kallada hydro-electric project in Kerala-all pending for over 10 years.

UT in its battle-plan for the south, there will be different tactics for each state. The state units have already probed the shortcomings in their electoral performance (see box). The Andhra Pradesh unit has uncovered a series of lapses which Naidu is in no mood to repeat. In Kerala, the feeling is one of missed opportunities. The party, which had netted 10 lakh votes in the District Council elections held in December last year, could convince only 6.75 lakh voters to opt for it in June. In Tamil Nadu, the BJP is in dire straits. The only issue it had-the alleged links between the LTTE and DMK-was hijacked by the AIADMK. And now with Chief Minister Jayalalitha hot on the Tigers' trail.



BJP chief Joshi at Trivandrum temple

even Advani has to admit: "The LTTE menace has been handled more effectively than ever before." The one bright spot in the party's dismal report card is Karnataka, With Congress(I) Chief Minister S. Bangarappa being his own worst enemy, the BJP drive to 'save Karnataka' should also woo new adherents. Hence the upbeat spirit.

But the south will not be snatched so easily. A cohesive campaign, cutting across states, will have to be put together. And for this, as also to divert attention from its championing of Hindi, the BIP will have to look beyond the Hindu pantheon.

Charting a New Course

A look at the party's electoral performance in May-June and its strategy now.

KARNATAKA

Voting	1989	1991	Increase
Percentage	2.6	28.8	+ 26.2

Saleable Points: Ram mantra, farmers' support. disenchantment with Congress(I) and Janata Dal.

New Strategy: 'Save Karnataka' campaign, target Bangarappa's corruption, organise regular tours by senior leaders like Advani and Vajpayee.

Lok Sabha Strength: Four

ANDHRA PRADESH

Voting	1989	1991	Increase
Percentage	2.1	8.8	+ 6.7

Reasons for Poor Showing: Sympathy wave, resource crunch, lack of grassroots support.

New Strategy: Reaching out to villages and women, 65 full-time workers enrolled, national leaders to launch 'Save Andhra Nadu' campaign.

Lok Sabha Strength: One

TAMIL NADU

Voting	1989	1991	Increase
Percentage	0.2	1.4	+ 1.2

Reasons for Poor Showing: Sympathy wave, anti-DMK feeling, might of Congress(I) and AIADMK.

New Strategy: Only issue of LTTE menace hijacked by Jayalalitha's tough handling, plans public agitations and installation of units in all villages.

Lok Sabha Strength: Nil

KERALA

Voting	1989	1991	Increase
Percentage	4.2	4.7	+0.5

Reasons for Poor Showing: Covert deal with Congress(I), resource crunch, sympathy wave.

New Strategy: Highlight Congress(I)'s 'pro-Muslim' stance, expose Karunakaran's plety as 'hoax', win over disaffected communists.

Lok Sabha Strength: Nil.

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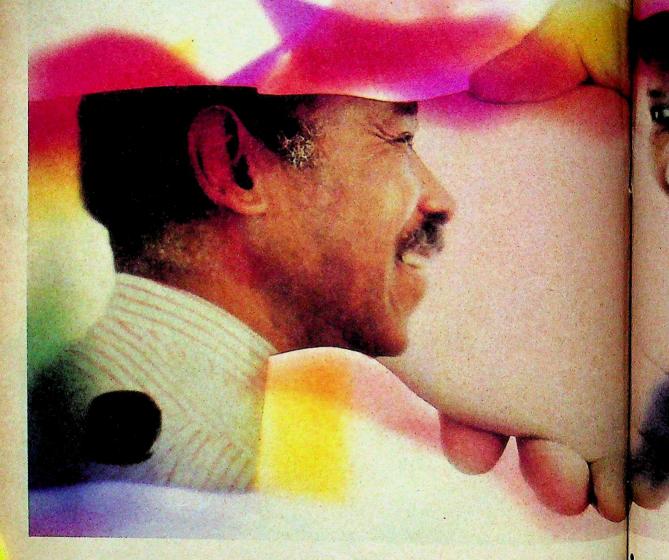
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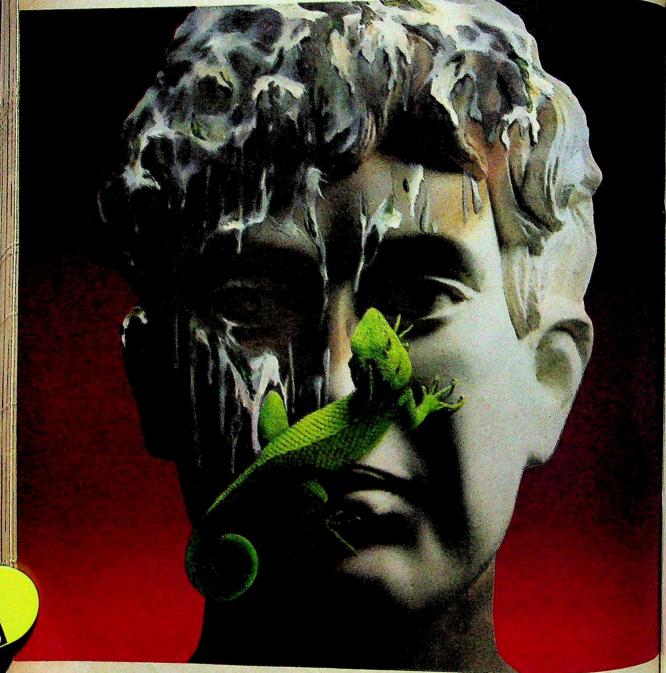
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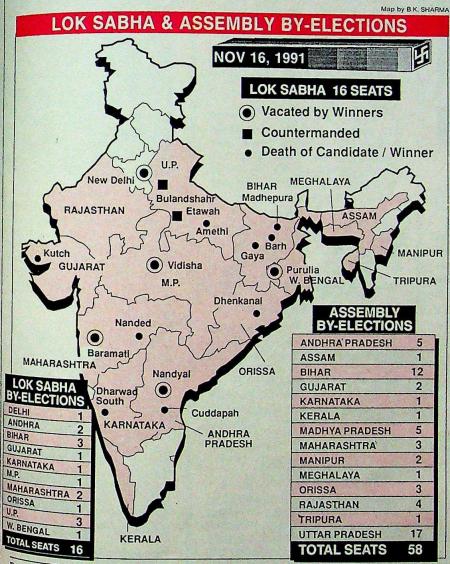
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1991 BY-ELECTIONS

Consolidation Moves

With 16 Lok Sabha and 58 assembly seats up for grabs, political parties gear up rapidly for another trial of strength.



By ZAFAR AGHA and JAVED M. ANSARI

N less than five months after the general elections, the country is gearing up for another round of polls on November 16. With as many as 16 Lok Sabha and 58 assembly constituencies up for grabs, the by-elections have become a sort of mini-general elections. Especially since the exercise will span one Union territory and as many as 15 states.

ntage in OA VCR.

Predictably, the stakes for all major hational political parties are high. The

LOK SABHA STRENGTH

CONGRESS(I)	227
BJP	119
JANATA DAL	56
CPI(M)	35
CPI	13
TDP	13
AIADMK	. 11
OTHERS	36
TOTAL	510*

*Excluding 33 vacant seats.

Congress(I) needs to quickly get rid of its minority government status, and will be going all out to capture as many Lok Sabha seats as possible. For the BJP, the principal opposition party, it will be a fight to retain its image as the 'only alternative to the Congress(I)'. As for the National Front-Left Front combine, the struggle will be to keep a hold on backward castes and Muslim votes.

As always, the elections will see high drama and acerbic campaigns. High profile contestants like Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, Defence Minister Sharad Pawar and Sonia Gandhi, if she contests, will add colour to the proceedings, while the BIP's Sadhvi Ritambhara with her fiery speeches will enliven the prestigious Amethi contest. Top leaders of all parties-Narasimha Rao, L.K. Advani, Atal Behari Vajpayee and V.P. Singh-will campaign to mobilise support.

More than ever before, no one seems to know the mind of the electorate. The political parties are ferreting about for winning issues and are busy finalising their strategies. The Congress(I) will in all likelihood bank heavily on its old stability plank. The app will have to look beyond Lord

Rama to gain the edge, and will be shoring up its saffron onslaught with the nationalist image of a party concerned about serious problems like Kashmir, Punjab and Assam. The National Front, especially the Janata Dal, will once again be harping on its Mandal and masjid themes. What is certain is that the Congress(I) will be at the receiving end of canard from all opposition parties for its failure to roll back prices in its first 100 days in power.

Since the contests will span so many states and local issues will carry

GSFC - Continuing Its Onward March



Shri H. R. Patankar

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

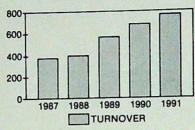
The following is the text of Statement made by Shri H.R. Patankar Chairman, Gujarat State Fertilizers Company Limited at the Twenty-Ninth Annual General Meeting of the Company held on the 26th September 1991 at the Registered Office of the Company.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

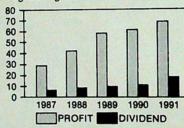
I am happy to welcome you at this 29th Annual General Meeting of your Company. The Annual Accounts and Directors' Report for the year 1990-91 have been with you for sometime and with your permission, I take them as read.

N EW PEAKS IN PRODUCTION AND TURNOVER

Your Company has continued its onward march during the year under review. Peak turnover, good net profit, new record in production and marketing, improved performance of the Polymer Unit and proposal for continuation of the high equity dividend on the enlarged equity capital are some of the bright features of last year's performance. Fertilizer production at the Baroda Complex achieved a record level of 9.32 lacs MT with a capacity utilisation of 133% as against 9.19 lacs MT with a capacity utilisation of 131% of the last year. Various plants



of industrial products also achieved high capacity utilisation ranging from 83% to 151%. As a result, your Company achieved the highest ever record turnover of Rs.739 crores registering an increase of 8.3% over



the sales turnover of Rs.682 crores of the year 1989-90. Your Company's performance would have been still better if the coastal DAP plant at Sikka which totally depends on the availability of imported raw materials had received sustained and regular supply of Phosphoric Acid and Ammonia.

N EW PROJECTS AND RESOURCES

Your Company has five projects on hand. The first is the II phase expansion of 50,000 MTPA Caprolactam Plant. The second is the implementation of 1350 MTPD Ammonia Plant. The third is the 10,000 MTPA Melamine Project; the fourth is the Cogeneration Project of 50 MW; and the fifth is 300,000 MTPA Phosphoric Acid project. These projects would involve an outlay of over Rs. 2000 crores. As a first step of resource mobilisation, your Company has proposed raising of Rs. 225 crores by way of Right Issue of Partly Convertible Debentures. The Partly Convertible Debentures. Issue will naturally benefit the existing shareholders. Details regarding



premium, interest on the nonconvertible portion and other aspeds have not yet been finalised. These will, no doubt, be finalised in the best interest of the shareholders in consultation with the Government of India, Government of Gujaral, Financial Institutions and other concerned parties.

FIBRE UNIT

Last year I had mentioned about the merger of Gujarat Nylons limited with your Company. You will be happy to know that the merger has now become effective. The issue of bonus shares required CCI consent and your Company has been vigorously pursuing the matter for obtaining such consent from the Government with a view to avoiding undue hardships to the small investors. Its hoped that the CCI consent will be received shortly and the share certificates in exchange and the bonus shares will be issued to the



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expansion G SFC _ COLL

Your Con interest of centre of i hydro reso upon coa distance. also limi resource shareholders of the erstwhile Gujarat Nylons Limited simultaneously so that the hardships to the shareholders could be minimised.

CURRENT PROGRESS

The production of various plants of your Company and the sales of various products have been satisfactory during the current year. The work on the construction of the first phase of Caprolactam expansion has been going on according to schedule and the trial commissioning is expected to be done in the early part of the year 1992. Similarly, work on the third phase of Co-generation of Steam and Power project, new Sulphuric Acid project, Melamine expansion project and Ammonia expansion project has been initiated and is progressing satisfactorily.

PROJECT

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As you know many Caprolactam producing companies in the world have their own fibre plants. Your Company now occupies a place among these world Caprolactam giants. The Fibre Unit near Surat, however, manufactures only Textile Yarn. In order to branch out into the Nylon Tyre Cord field, your Company has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a large tyre manufacturing company to install a plant for Nylon Tyre Cord of 12,000 MTPA capacity. Thus for the first Ime, your Company will enter into a collaboration with a private sector company in the country to jointly manufacture a product - the raw malerial of which is produced by your Company and the final product of which is consumed by the Tyre Cord Company. Therefore, it is a venture in the mutual interest of the two companies. The venture will consume 25% of the production of the II phase of the Caprolactam

SFC — CERA COLLABORATION

Your Company has always kept the interest of the Gujarat State at the centre of its activities. Gujarat has no upon coal to be brought from a long also limited. The major natural resource of Gujarat is lignite. The

latest technological development indicates a possibility of conversion of lignite into liquid fuel as well as the establishment of a Refinery for converting lignite into various fuels. Your Company has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Centre for Environmental and Energy R & D Commercialization Services - Asia and Africa (CERA) for acquiring this technology. This collaboration would be the first step to achieve energy independence for Gujarat State.

G SFC INVESTMENT AND LEASING COMPANY LTD.

Last Year, I spoke to you about GSFC Investment And Leasing Company Ltd. The approval of the Government of India and the Financial Institutions has now been received and this Company will start its operations in the near future. The operations of this Company will give an impetus to development of small and medium sector units based on the GSFC products and other related product lines.

S AFETY & ENVIRONMENT

Your Company has always remained conscious and dedicated to maintain high standards of safety and environment within the complex and in the surrounding area. Your Company has received three safety awards during the year under review.

A WARDS

At the national level, your Company has received the prestigious FAI Runner-up award for achieving the second place in the country's fertilizer industry for the best performance in production of phosphatic fertilizers for the year 1989-90. Similarly, it has also won the 1991 IMM - Singer Marketing Man of the Year award for the best marketing performance.

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

We continue to lay emphasis on the need for continuous Research &

Development to strengthen and maintain the current standards in different fields and to make forays into new areas of development. Besides the continuing projects of research, your Company has made considerable progress in research on strain isolation, fermentation and bioassy work on biopesticide project. Possibilities for international joint R & D work on membrane technology and corrosion are being further explored and pursued.

O BITUARY

Shri Ashokbhai Patel, who was a Director of our Company for over a decade died under tragic circumstances on 29-8-1991. May his soul rest in peace.

VOTE OF THANKS

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to the Government of India, Government of Gujarat, Indian Financial Institutions, International Finance Corporation, Washington, Banks and other agencies who have continued to take interest in the progress of your Company and supported its efforts. I am also thankful to my colleagues on the Board for their guidance and contribution. My special thanks are to members of the staff and officers of your Company for their devotion to duty, hard work and well-knit team spirit without which your Company would not have been able to achieve continuous progress. My thanks are to members of the shareholders' and debentureholders' family who have always shown unflinching trust in the working of the Company. I also wish to thank the family of our dealers, customers and suppliers whose cooperation and sincerity have been important inputs in the progress of this Company.

JAI HIND

Note: This does not purport to be a record of proceedings of the Twenty-Ninth Annual General Meeting of the Company.



Gujarat State Fertilizers Company Ltd.

P. O. Fertilizernagar - 391 750, Dist. Vadodara.

as much weight as national ones. predicting the results is impossible. All manner of caste and communal combinations will be at play. In Bihar as usual, caste will play a key role in the electoral rhetoric. The Hindutva vs secularism battle will rage in states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya

Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat, with the BJP locking horns with the Congress(I) and the National Front-Left Front. In the south, the Congress(I) will play upon regional pride and project itself as the only political party to have ever provided a prime minister from the south.

All in all, the upcoming by-elections will provide the first real pointer to how people view Congress(I) rule at the Centre; and will also give an insight into the continuing validity of issues, such as Mandal and mandir. that dominated the last general election.

HECTIC PREPARATIONS

STAKES

STRATEGY

ALLIANCES

STAR CAMPAIGNERS

CONGRESS(I)



Numbers game for the party. Aim to corner 8-10 seats. **But priority**

is getting Narasimha Rao, Pawar and Amethi nominee elected. Will still fall short by 27odd seats for a simple majority in Lok Sabha. But can then woo the vacillating MPs from Janata Dal and SJP.



Selling the stability plank again. Highlighting performance of the Central

Government. As Arjun Singh says: "We've pulled the country out of casteist and communal chaos." Wooing the backward castes through new Mandal policy. Dalits with land reform moves. And Muslims with the religious places bill.



Going at it all alone. In Maharashtra, may have understanding with

Janata Dal to defeat BJP in two Lok Sabha and three assembly seats. In Gujarat, SJP will help party as in June elections. In Narasimha Rao's Nandyal constituency in Andhra Pradesh, Telugu Desam is unlikely to contest, deemed by NTR.



Narasimha Rao is likely to visit all Lok Sabha constituencies. Key vote catcher in south along with Karunakaran. Sharad Pawar to help in Maharashtra, Gujarat; Tiwari, Arjun Singh and Scindia in Hindi belt.



Wresting more space as main opposition. Maintaining sway

over Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Retaining New Delhi and Vidisha, vacated by Advani, Vajpayee. And gaining Amethi with Sadhvi Ritambhara. May do badly, so belittle by-polls' importance.



Unable to build the Avodhva temple, party is cooking a heady mix

of religion and politics. Using shrines bill to brand other parties as anti-Hindu. Price rise to counter Congress(I). Focus on Kashmir, **Punjab and Assam** imbroglios to project itself as the "only real alternative to Congress".



Only with Shiv Sena. Alliance survives though Bal **Thackeray**

continued to embarrass the BJP by hobnobbing with Devi Lal, and made things a bit sticky for the BJP by putting up a Shiv Sena candidate in Baramati, thereby splitting the Hindu vote and ensuring Pawar's win.



The trio of L.K. Advani, Vajpayee and Murli Manohar Joshi. Helping hand from Uma Bharti and Sadhvi Ritambhara. Chief ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan to help in their states.

NATIONAL FRONT



Holdina **OBCs** and Muslims in north. Uttar Pradesh priority, but

torn between V.P. Singh and Ajit Singh. Bulandshahr a good prospect. Amethi. Etawah out. In Bihar. Laloo Yadav on test again. Hopes bright in Gaya, Madhepur, Barh.



Take credit as initiator of Mandal. Criticise Congress(I) on price rise.

as well as devaluation and liberalisation. Counter BJP by projecting Janata Dal-SJP as the only secular force. In Uttar Pradesh harp on the BJP Government's "political vendetta".



Tie up with SJP in Uttar Pradesh as split in the OBC and Muslim

votes harmed last time. In Maharashtra and Gujarat, may support Congress(I) to beat BJP-Shiv Sena. Elsewhere, National Front to go it with the Left as usual. Forward Bloc defending Purulia in West Bengal.



Mainly V.P. Singh as before. Laloo Yadav, Ram Vilas Paswan and N.T. Rama Rao will pitch in. Ajit Singh will cover the Jat belt. Biju Patnalk will hold fort in Dhenkanal in Orissa.

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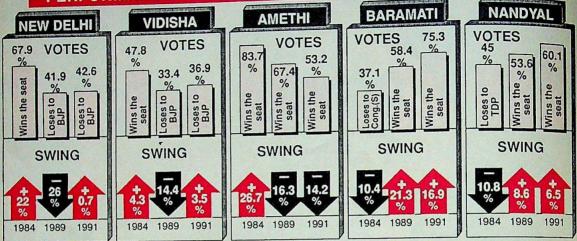
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PERFORMANCE OF CONGRESS(I) IN KEY CONSTITUENCIES



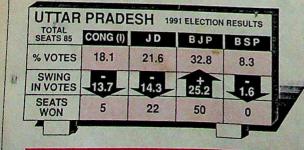
- New Delhi is L.K. Advani turf. But this time round the Congress(I) is quite determined to secure the seat that Raiesh Khanna lost by a whisker. Both sides are looking for star candidates.
- A temple town of 9 lakh voters, it'll see a proxy war between proteges of Vajpayee and Madhavrao Scindia, This seat will put the BJP's sway in Madhya Pradesh to test.
- Even if Sonia says no, economic and emotional reasons will ensure a Congress(I) win. However the fiery Sadhvi Ritambhara of the BJP may yet provide colour and competition.
- Here the BJP can at best reduce **Sharad Pawar's** victory margin. This crucial seat of 12 lakh voters is in fact a Congress(I) power bastion, and Pawar's exclusive political domain.
- Nandyal was virtually won when Narasimha Rao filed his papers. NTR has conceded victory, and the BJP is only offering a token fight. Last time the Congress(I) had a big win here.

THE BIG ONES

UTTAR PRADESH: BJP's Litmus Test

[N June, the electorate sewed up more than half of Uttar Pradesh for the BJP, but in the November by-elections, the party may just come apart at its seams in the three Lok Sabha and 16 Vidhan Sabha seats.

The by-elections are vital to the BJP which wants to silence critics who credit its June win to Mulayam Singh Yadav's mistakes. But aside from the controversial Ram temple issue, it has lost ground to the Congress(I) on the Mandal issue. In June, the upper castes had voted for the BJP, but now the state Government's re-promulgation of Yadav's ordinance on quotas has angered them. Worse, most of the seats lie in non-вјР areas and there might be an all-party understanding to defeat the BJP. All eyes will be on Amethi and Etawah-Mulayam Singh's bastion, under fire from Congress(I). Overall, the Congress(I) may just walk away with the honours, as the Janata Dal and sjp try to effect much-needed unity. -DILIP AWASTHI



BIHAR: No Cakewalk for Laloo

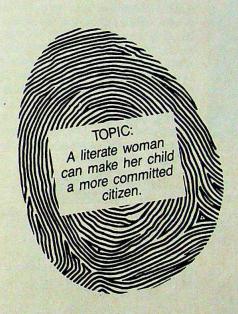
ALOO Prasad Yadav, the architect of the Left-National LiFront's victory in the last general elections, has to contend with a crumbling citadel this time. His popularity has been waning, particularly among the backwards and Muslims. His party is riven by factionalism and the allies are

Charts by B K SHARMA

BIHAR	TELEVIJON NEGOCIO			
SEATS 54	CONG (I)	JD	ВЈР	JMM
% VOTES	22.9	33.0	17.5	5.2
SWING IN VOTES	5.2	4.7	5.8	2.0
SEATS WON	2	28	5	6

disaffected. The bureaucracy has turned against him. Though the three Lok Sabha constituencies—Madhepura. Barh and Gaya—are backward-dominated, the Janata Dal will find it hard to retain them. However, for Laloo, the outcome of 12 assembly elections is more important. His party, short by 30 seats of a majority in the assembly, survives in power with the backing of IMM's 15 members, Left parties' 28 and most of the 31 Independents. The Congress(I) too is and most of the 31 Independental and Sitaram Kasariki in disarray after Jagannath Mishra and Sitaram Kesari's bid to Mandalise the party. And the BIP still -FARZAND AHMED has only Hindutva to offer.

HPF PROUDLY PRESENTS THE WINNERS OF PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTEST



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DR. ARUN PHOPHALIA, 5/JH/9, Jawahar Nagar, Jaipur 302 004

ATANU GHOSH, C/o Prof. S N Ghosh, 102, Southern Avenue "Sarobar" Flat - 2B. Calcutta 700 029. ANIL AGGARWAL, C/o Director CCRT Bahawalpur House, Bhagwan Dass Road, New Deihr 110 001.

D N BARASKAR, At Post Shendurjanaghat, Amravati, Warud 444 907, Maharashtra. S RAVI SHANKAR, M 15/4, 281h Cross Street, Besant Nagar, Madras-600 090.

PREM KAPOOR, BB, BF Munirka, New Delhi 110 067. DILIP CHATTERJEE, 10, A T Chatterjee Road,

Calcutta-700 031.
DR. CH, LAKSHMI KUMAR, M.D. Dept. of Forensic Medicine

Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore-575 001. ASHIM MUKHERJEE, The CESCILID. 18, Rabindra Sarani,

R S SURESH, 20, 2nd Block, T R Nagar, Bangalore 560 028.

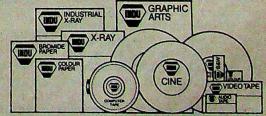
The winners of the consolation prizes

SHOBHA SHARMA, 14-D. Street - 4. Sector - 10. GIRISH PARIKH, Panchvati, 1st Lane, Elks Bridge. Ahmedabad 380 006. GIRDHARI PALIWAL, No. 912, Nataniym Ka Rasta. Behind S B B J, Choura Rasta, Jaipur 302 003.

PARATE JITENDRA GAJANANDBHAI, Hiraben Chawl, G N Tailors, Satyanarayan Nagar, Amrarwadi, Ahmedabad 380 026.

IAJ. GEN. V R Raghavan AVSM., GOC 28 INF. DIV C/o 56 APO.

are being intimated by post.



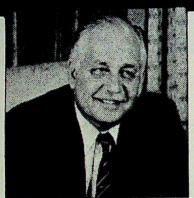
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Making the Indian International

Excerpts from the speech of Shri J.N. Sapru, Chairman, I.T.C. Limited, at the 80th Annual General Meeting held on 23.9.1991.



Shri J.N. Sapru

THE CHANGING WORLD

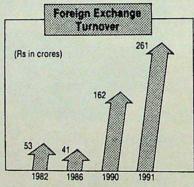
A new world order is clearly taking shape which is demanding better economic performance and greater freedom from misplaced authoritative

Events in our own country have been no less momentous. The rising tide of terrorism and fissiparious tendencies in several parts of the country are themselves, to a large extent, the outcome of our very unsatisfactory economic performance. A young and promising life -Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's has been snatched from us by the cruel hand of terror. Whatever be our own persuasions, let us pause for a moment and delve on the Vision for which he had to sacrifice his life. Let us become worthy inheritors of the Great Indian Dream, and designers and implementors of its realisation.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Your Company's very strong performance again this year is a continuing tribute to the work and zealous efforts of your employees and the patronage of our customers. In comparison to last year, gross income at Rs. 2316 crores increased by 27% and net income at Rs. 1014 crores by 50%. Profit before tax has crossed the century mark for the first time at Rs. 121.39 crores and foreign exchange turnover at Rs. 261 crores has reached a record peak. Post tax profits at Rs. 77.52 crores were 47% ahead of last year. In the context of this good performance, and with the prospect of another even better year ahead, your Board has thought it prudent to recommend a confirmation of the interim dividend of 54% as final, and another bonus issue of 3 shares for every 5 held, only two years after a 1:1 bonus announcement.

Compared to 1982, your Company's gross income has nearly quadrupled. Net income has increased over five and a half times, and contribution to the Exchequer at Rs. 1345 crores has increased over three times. During the same period, profit before tax has increased sevenfold and profit after tax, tenfold. What has given us even greater satisfaction has been our achievement in the past three years on the export and foreign exchange front. With foreign exchange turnover at Rs. 261 crores in 1991, your Company is perhaps the country's largest earner of foreign exchange in the private sector.



I would like to here pay tribute, and record my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my colleagues and employees at all levels, who have given me their unstinted support and without whose dedication and efforts these sustained results would not have been possible.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Through strategic interventions and actions, your Organisation has been designed as a successful multibusiness corporation. It will continue to be our endeavour to 'visioneer', restructure, reorder, and re-skill your Company, such that it remains competitive in its businesses, and we are able to safeguard your returns and your investments in the immediate and in the future.

TRIBENI TISSUES LTD.

I am pleased to advise that the Scheme of Arrangement as approved by you for amalgamation of Tribeni Tissues Ltd. with your Company is mo gressing most satisfactorily and all approvals and completion of the amalgamation is now anticipated by December, 1991. The Department of Company Affairs, Government of India, has approved to amalgamation by its order dated 6th September

The High Court at Calcutta has also pronounced approval of the said amalgamation on 11th con tember, 1991 and the certified copy of the order awaited. On receipt of the latter, the other prozdures and approvals will be expeditiously on pleted and, as approved by you, the amalganain will be given effect to from 1st April, 1990.

In relation to clause 13 of the terms and cond tions of the Scheme of Amalgamation, the respe tive Boards of your Company and Tribeni Tissa Limited shall meet before 30th September, 19918 extend the date of implementation from 30th \$5 tember, 1991 to a suitable date thereafter.

EXCISE

I would like to only reiterate that your Compa has not ever evaded excise duties, nor knowing transgressed the law. In the opinion of your Dist tors, your Company accepts no further liabilities respect of the disputed issues and will continue take all appropriate steps for their early and saish tory resolution.

ITC — ITS PRINCIPAL PILLARS

But what are the foundations of the success your Corporation? What are the 'Pillars of Wish on which the ITC edifice is founded?

First, a criticism, and one that is not about unjustified of business especially in the oping world, is that businessmen war commercial margins of brands but preferance commodities. Your Organisation has a belonged to this category, and this arabid tic tendency is suicidal in the emerging game. We believe in creating branded in differentiating our products investments in value addition. Marking cesses encompass all the functional for your Company's businesses, and this is will better equip us with confidence lo tually take our place in the emerging in tional competitive order.

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Gessment wi countries show act in our pe oa keep waiti Political inde tancipation i Secondly, ITC is a professional Corporation. It is professional in that ownership is separated from control, and Company policy places a premium on keeping human skills well-honed and contemporary. It is in professional companies that Meritocracy can truly thrive. As the global order unfolds with its many imperatives and ramifications, Meritocracies will have a singular advantage. In the seething intensity of international competition, the vital difference between organisations will be the relative abilities, motivations, and morale of its people.

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ril, 1990.

Finally, we believe in the importance of good corporate citizenship and the value of commercial results. Profits are fundamental for progress, and as I have reiterated before, bankrupt businesses do not make a strong nation. Whilst we commend a fair return on investment, we hold that profiteering is the very anathema of good corporate citizenship. In the changing world view of business, corporations exist by societal sanctions not only to create wealth, but to steward the earth's and societies' scarce resources. This world view matches a dominant characteristic which has ingrained itself into the fibre of your Corporation as it has developed and evolved.

The performance of your Organisation, thereor, and the principles on which it is based, have appered and conditioned your Corporation at an lageously to face looming global challenges. hacompetitive world it is the fittest that survive. Newer technologies will have to be absorbed and pastered, Quality and Productivity will be the lew buzz words. If we have survived and prospred thus far by making investments in learning, must redouble our efforts and learn at an increasingly faster rate.

THE NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY

In response to the remorseless logic of factors eding to the creation of a global economy, the Comment must be complimented for formulation by ighe 'New Industrial Policy'.

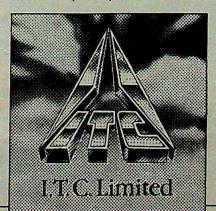
Viewed in isolation, India's economic devel-Official may pass muster. However, a comparative sessment with an evoked set of comparable Control shows substantial scope for improve an in our performance. The people of India will to keep waiting for the fulfilment of promises. independence without economic descipation is an unacceptable contradiction.

Therefore, the New Industrial Policy is a significant measure to unchain the Indian Tiger.

We will now have to be much quicker and more dynamic in our response to environmental challenges and opportunities. To succeed, we must achieve levels of international competitiveness in terms of Productivity and Quality. International alliances and even ownership will encourage technology transfers, increase export possibilities, and create contemporary skills and expertise. To avail of the advantages created by economies of scale and ancillarisation, acquisitions, mergers, and divestments as part of the global game will become 'things of the present'. With the New Industrial Policy, India has taken a long and strategic stride in becoming a 'global platform' competing in the comity of nations for capital and enterprise in the pursuit of progress.

In an interdependent world it is a matter for thought whether capital and technology transfers could be or should be merely a one-way traffic. Our colonial past has, perhaps, created a paranoic fear of multinationals, to the extent that we have restrained and inhibited our own companies from becoming multinationals and thereby participating in the progress and prosperity of other nations to our advantage. We have inflicted upon ourselves these self-imposed sanctions. It is time that we allowed our companies to carry the Indian Flag abroad by establishing joint ventures and/or owning companies abroad. Thus, not only can the world experience the calibre of our people and products, but in so doing, transfer and absorption of technology are facilitated as also the absorption of contemporary work cultures and practices. In short, there is a crying need to promote Indian Internationals.

Whilst lauding the New Industrial Policy, there must be no delay in its implementation. If the New



Industrial Policy is actualised, it will become the comer-stone in the realisation of the Great Indian

STRATEGY—PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY

Productivity and Quality are two inseparable and complementary key areas for strategising for future success. We must remove the anomaly we have perpetuated for four and a half decades that the same factors of production and work ethos and ethic, can create two different qualities, one for the domestic, and yet another for the international market. To achieve acceptable international levels of Productivity and Quality and instil pride and meaning into the 'Made in India' label, we must develop the appropriate structures, systems, and

CONCLUSION

On a somewhat personal note, I had joined your Company as a young man straight out of college, and have served it continuously for nearly thirty-seven eventful years. It has been my privilege to have been a director on the Board for the last eighteen years, and to be the Company's Chairman for the last nine years.

There are so many individuals and institutions to thank that no speech could include all of them. I convey my appreciation, gratitude, and thanks to all the stakeholders, and my good wishes for the continuing progress and prosperity of your Company. I am conscious that the career of an individual is but a breath or two in the infinite existence of an organisation. But when I shall look back in the years to come, I will take pride in the knowledge that I retired from an Organisation that is strong and viable and poised for scaling greater heights; that it is in the hands of people, both at the helm and throughout the length and breadth of the Organisation, who are visionary, capable, dedicated and committed to making the 'Made in India by ITC' a household name throughout the world.

This does not purport to be a report of the proceedings of the 80th Annual General Meeting.

For the full text of the speech, please write to:

The Corporate Public Relations Manager, I.T.C. Limited, Virginia House, 37 Chowringbee, Calcutta 700 071.

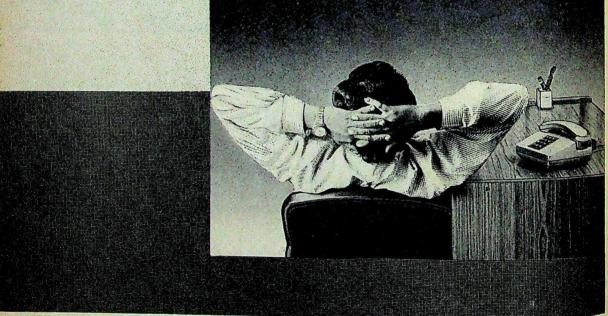
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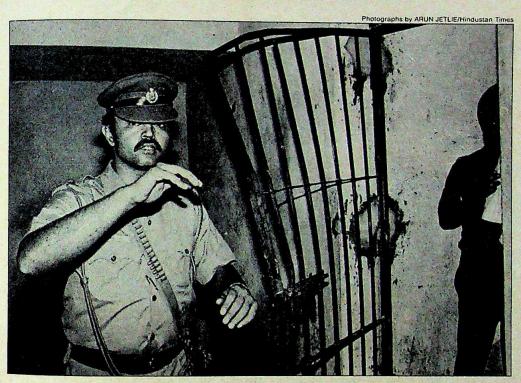
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The Mystery Deepens

The easy escape of the four diamond merchants and the arrest of one of their executives has raised more questions than it has answered



By RAHUL PATHAK

VEN as some pieces of the puzzle fall into place, the contours itself are changing. The four Bombaybased diamond merchants along with one of their executives, kidnapped from their New Delhi hotels on September 14 and 15, may be home and free but the crime is far from solved. In fact, now the CBI seems to be the only one keen to discover the clue to a conundrum which the victims seem more than anxious to misplace.

Last fortnight, the five men and a driver Babu Lal, crawled out of captivity of the south Delhi bungalow where they were being held. But the subsequent arrest of Anupam Kulkarni, export manager of one of the gem tycoons and the only executive among the abducted group, raised more questions than it answered.

In a truly audacious operation, Gautam Mehta, Milan and Saunak Parekh, Rajesh Mehta and Kulkarni, along with the chauffeur, were lured to

the upmarket Sukhdev Vihar bungalow which was to become their prison. While the police, the CBI and Interpol scanned the country for them, they stayed put in the basement, within shouting distance of the local police

POINTED POSERS

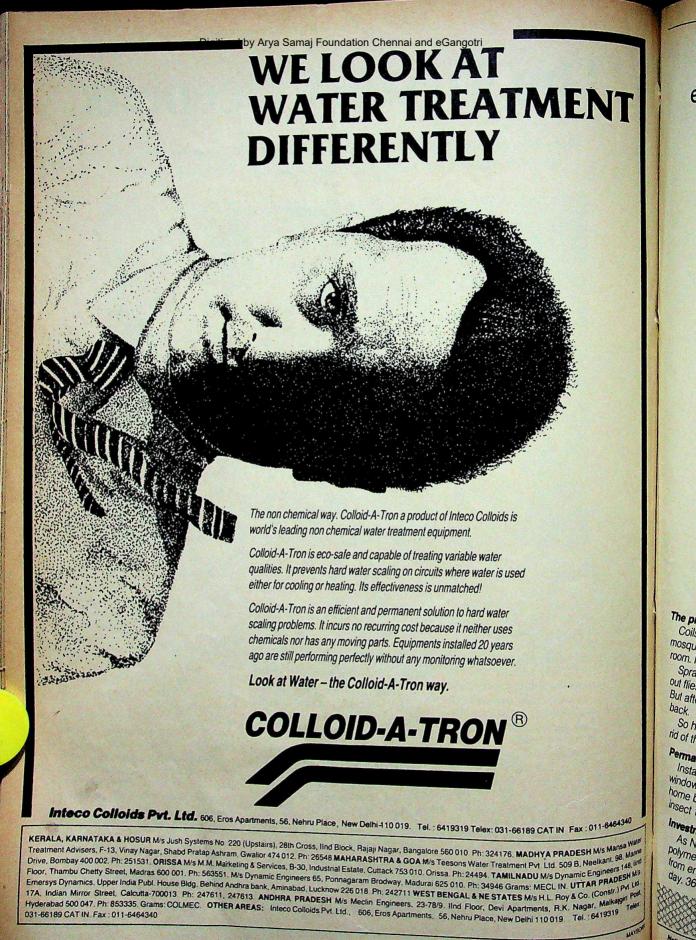
- Could Kulkarni have vanished for two days without any of the others noticing? And why did Babu Lal not speak up?
- Could the merchants have been released without ransom?
- Why are the merchants going out of their way to shield Kulkarni in court?
- Did the merchants pay ransom through havala?
- If the charges are true, was Kulkarni acting for Choudhry or the diamond merchants?

Grill door broken open by hostages: anti-climax

station. And even as the colony awoke on October 3 to find six badly-frightened and unshaven men coming out of the basement, Ravi Choudhry-the man who wove every skein of the fine web-was still missing. The six were immediately whisked away by the CBI. And to the most critical query, the media and the sleuths elicited a difficult-to-believe response. The merchants and their families insisted that no ransom had been paid.

Butthemanner of their release puts this in doubt, because their five-man guard had vanished a day earlier. Even more incredible is that after investing over Rs 2 lakh-including Rs 78,000 on the Oberoi Hotel bill-in the planning, Choudhry could have let the prize catches slip away from his grasp. Especially since the investigators were nowhere near locating the merchants.

And then Kulkarni's arrest on October 4 set the stage for a series of



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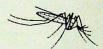
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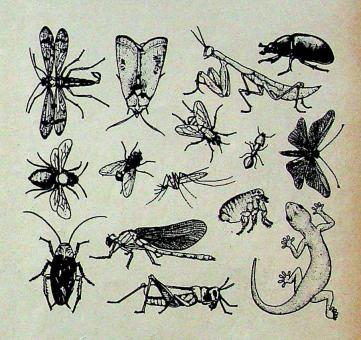
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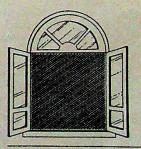
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Man Within

but there is little in the life of Anupam Kulkarni, 30, to hint at a propensity to pull off a caper such as the CBI is suspecting him of. Living in a one-room apartment in the congested Dadar area of Bombay with his parents, Kulkarni has led a humdrum middle class existence.

People in his apartment house

are reluctant to believe that he could have been in cahoots with Ravi Choudhry. Kulkarnis' landlord, Shiv Sena leader Sudhir Joshi, too gives Kulkarni a clean chit: "I have always known him as quiet, soft-spoken. An unlikely person to get involved in anything shady." However, admits his father, Jayant Kulkarni: "Anupam was ambitious. He saw his grandpa travel abroad frequently and wanted to imitate him. He even met a Singapore party in 1989 to start something of his own."

A science graduate from Bombay University, Kulkarni has been working with Beautiful Diamonds for a year and half now. He was trusted by his company with the most delicate assignments: which may explain why his company is organising his defence. He has been to Singapore before on official work. Even though his father claims Kulkarni did not even work for the diamonds' division of the company, he was in touch with Choudhry, from the day the Ferruzzi 'offer' came up.

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startling revelations which confounded the confusion. The arrest itself was low-key: the CBI said it didn't want publicity to wreck the investigation. The evidence the sleuths have come up with so far seems incendiary enough to warrant such caution. In an additional sessions judge court in New Delhi, CBI

dropped a officers bombshell: that three days after the abduction, Kulkarni had gone to Singapore for two days. And that while his fellow hostages cooled their heels, he travelled as Gautam Mehta, probably using his international credit card to splurge over Rs 6 lakh. How he did so without any of the other victims noticing adds another bizarre twist to the case. The CBI counsel said incontrovertible evidence was winging its way from Singapore that

Kulkarni had made the trip on a forged passport. But the Singapore High Commission in New Delhi maintains that no visa was given to any Gautam Mehta between September 16 and 19. Yet, Kulkarni's defence is being organised and financed by the company he works for—Beautiful Diamonds. And the CBI is convinced that the case is complicated enough for any possibility.

The CBI. in fact, had all along been working on the premise that an insider had helped Choudhry. They were convinced that only someone within the diamond trade could have acquainted the conman with the bazaar jargon. They had begun scrutinising Kulkarni's antecedents even before the

abducted men were found.

The ransom theory is still being pursued. But even if the ransom was actually paid, the merchant community will hardly be forthcoming with details. The merchants' relatives, who addressed the media the day after their release claimed to be equally baffled



Basement which housed the hostages

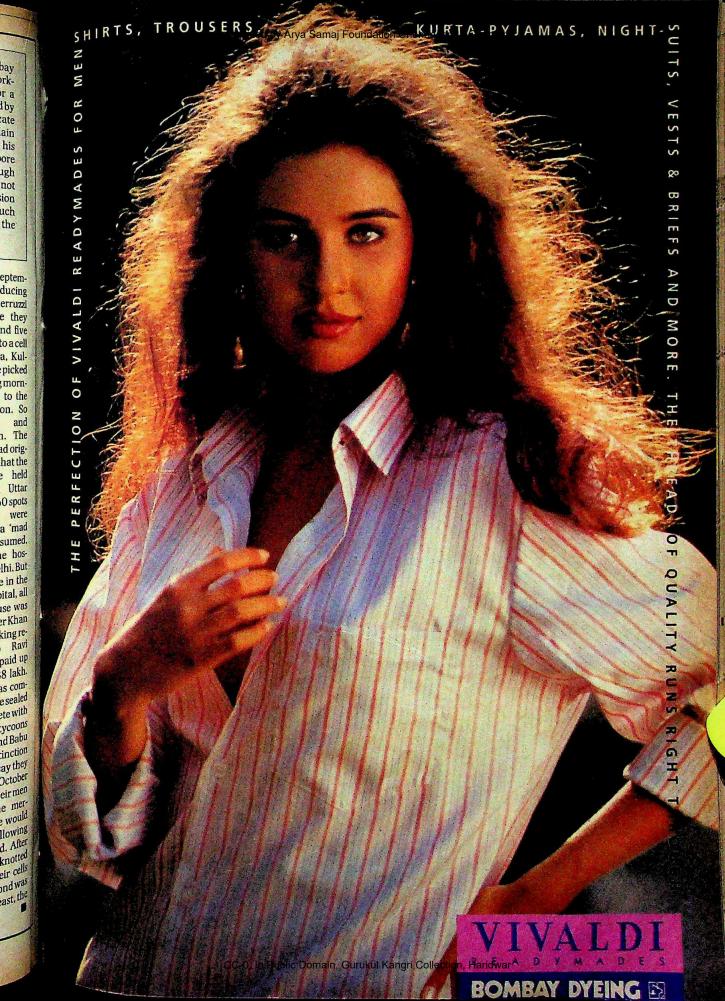
about the release. "We have also wondered why they were freed. But the fact is that we have not paid a single paisa of ransom since there was no demand for ransom," said Kavin Parikh, Milan's father. And if there weren't already enough complications, it seemed that some of the kidnap gang's members had been detained abroad. According to the merchants, the gang told them they would be released the moment their men were let out.

The kidnapping itself has been recreated and it is fairly close to what newspapers had been chronicling. Gautam Mehta was the first to be abducted. Choudhry drove him to

Sukhdev Vihar on the night of September 14 on the pretext of introducing him to 'chief executive' of Ferruzzi Finanziaria, Ferruzzi Jr. Once they reached the house, Mehta found five armed men waiting to lead him to a cell in the basement. Rajesh Mehta, Kulkarni, and driver Babu Lal, were picked

up the following morning and driven to the same destination. So Milan and were Saunak Parikh. The investigators had originally believed that the hostages were held somewhere in Uttar Pradesh. Over 60 spots the state were scoured. Only a 'mad man', it was assumed. would hide the hostages in New Delhi. But there they were in the heart of the capital, all along. The house was hired by a Nasser Khan who bore a striking resemblance to Ravi Choudhry: he paid up

a six-month advance of Rs 1.38 lakh. The basement of the house was completely renovated: all ducts were sealed and two makeshift cells, complete with grills, were erected. The four tycoons and Kulkarni were put in one and Babu Lal in the other—the class distinction was maintained. The captives say they didn't see Choudhry again. On October 2, the guards told them that "their men abroad had been freed". The merchants were told that someone would come to release them the following day. The guards then vanished. After hours of debating, the six men knotted a sheet around the grill of their cells and tugged. The grill bent. Beyond was liberty. But for one of them at least, the reprieve was only temporary.



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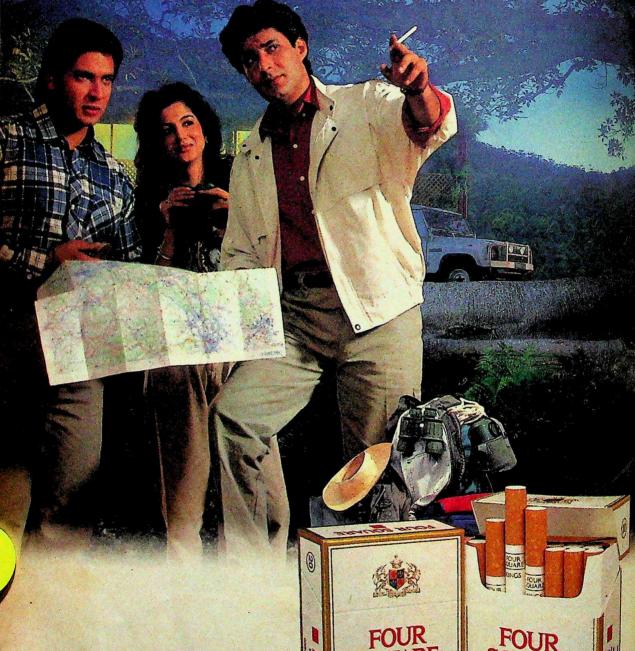
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THE BUREAUCRACY

Moving to a Plan

Reshuffle shows resolve to implement policy

T wasn't exactly the night of the long knives. But the major bureaucratic reshuffle last fortnight undoubtedly provided some insight into the direction and manner in which Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao intends to steer the country. One message came through loud and clear: the prime minister has a definite policy on domestic and economic affairs. And is determined to pursue it, even if his personal survival is at stake.

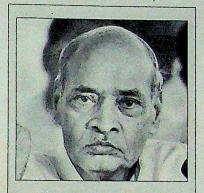
The main signal from the reshuffle is that Narasimha Rao is willing to delegate power to key ministers. They can now select top bureaucrats of their choice, if the appointment can be professionally justified and if the bureaucrats are committed to the emerging policy. As Minister of State for Commerce P. Chidambaram observes: "We are being consulted now.'

So Home Minister S.B. Chavan too has had his say. The new home secretary is fellow Maharashtrian, M.D. Godbole. And expenditure secretary K.P. Geethakrishnan has been given combined charge of finance and revenue, replacing S.P. Shukla. Commerce secretary Montek Singh Ahluwalia, formerly with the World Bank and the PMo, has become secretary for economic affairs in the Finance Ministry. and food processing secretary K.V.R. Nair is now the expenditure secretary.

The high-level appointments signal a departure from previous practice. Normally, the cabinet secretary decides in consultation with the prime minister. Ministers are not consulted. primarily to avoid excessive interdependence which complicates cabinet reshuffles.

In view of the fundamental changes envisaged in both economic and internal policies, that practice has not been followed. Every minister has not only been given the choice of appointing his own private secretary. but also those with especially onerous responsibilities have been given the freedom to select more senior officers. But they have to prove to the prime minister that their nominee is genuinely required, and political or private considerations are not at work.

So Finance Minister Manmohan Singh was allowed to get Geetha-



Rao is willing to let key ministers select top bureaucrats if the appointment is professionally justified.







(From above) Montek Ahluwalia; Madhay Godbole: Geethakrishnan

krishnan who has had long experience in the Finance Ministry. He has also worked with Manmohan Singh before. had a close rapport with him, and enjoyed his confidence. Geethakrishnan is also reportedly committed to the finance minister's new economic programme. In fact, even before the bureaucratic reshuffle, Manmohan Singh would often refer files to Geethakrishnan when they should rightfully have been handled by finance secretary Shukla. It was felt that Shukla's rigid, conservative approach was not in tune with the present economic thinking, which would hamper implementation of the drastic measures required. Probably on his way out for the same reason is secretary-rank Chief Economic Adviser, Deepak Nayyar.

The changes in the economics ministries appear to make considerable sense. Clubbing revenue with finance under the same secretary, as was the case in the past, is pragmatic. Likewise, Ahluwalia's appointment as economic affairs secretary cannot be faulted. Apart from giving general guidelines, he is in charge of marrying the conflicting interests of his former charge, the Commerce Ministry, and the new economic policy. Ahluwalia will also be responsible for dealing with international financial institutions. He already has considerable experience with them as a negotiator and earlier as an employee.

However, not everyone is impressed with Narasimha Rao's clarity of purpose and decisiveness. As a senior bureaucrat observed: "Things really haven't changed much. There is as much confusion as before, especially in the allocation of work in the economics ministries."

Meanwhile, changes are imminent in troubled Jammu and Kashmir as well. The jury is still out on Governor Girish Chandra Saxena's future, as he frantically lobbies for his continuance. But there is every indication of Central unhappiness with him. He is likely to replaced, perhaps by former Kashmir governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, Saxena's three advisers-B.I. Heeriee. Virinder Prakash and Ved Marwahwill also go. Ashok Jaitly, financial commissioner, is slated to be the state's new chief secretary in place of V.K. Kapoor, while Director-General of Police J.N. Saxena is also being transferred. But whether all this highlevel reshuffling brings in the desired results is still debatable.

-ARUN CHACKO

CARBIDE CASE

A New Turn

Officials face prosecution

FTER seven long years, justice finally caught up with Union Carbide Corporation (ucc), but only set the stage for another round of legal battle. Last fortnight, a fivejudge constitution bench of the Supreme Court upheld the \$470-million (Rs 715 crore) settlement for Bhopal gas leak victims. But it quashed the criminal immunity granted to the USbased company, its Asian and Indian

disappointment about agreeing to the 1989 compensation. The reopening of the criminal case has been hailed by all, except those in the dock. It is unlikely that Anderson will appear for trial. Says company counsel Fali Nariman: "The ucc will not be affected as it is not subject to the jurisdiction of Indian courts." If the official refuses to cooperate, the CBI will file a case in the US.

The Supreme Court has also directed ucc to set up a 500-bed hospital for victims in Bhopal, while asking the Government to provide insurance cover for no less than 1,00,000 gas

> Gas victims being treated at Hamidia Hospital, Bhopal



subsidiaries and nine officials.

By overturning its own judgement given two years ago, the Supreme Court will in effect be reopening the criminal case filed four years ago in the Bhopal district court by the CBI. Topping the list of officials facing a maximum of life imprisonment under Section 304 of the IPC are retired UCC chairman Warren Anderson and former ucu, chief K. Mahindra. The other accused: Chairman-cum-Managing Director of ucil V. Gokhale, former vicepresident K. Kamdar, Works Manager of the Bhopal plant J. Mukund, and four other officials of the plant at the time of the gas leak which killed about 3,700-R.B. Roy Choudhary, S.P. Choudhary, K.V. Shetty, and S.I. Qureshi.

There have been mixed reactions to the judgement. Zaherili Gas Kand Sangharsh Morcha's Alok Pratap Singh has welcomed the end to the battle for compensations. But other social activists have expressed their

CASE HISTORY

DEC. 2-3, 1984: Deadly gas leak at UCC's Bhopal plant.

APR. 8, 1985: Indian Government sues UCC in US court.

MAY 12, 1986: US court transfers case to India.

SEP. 5, 1986: Indian Governmentfiles Rs 3,900-cr case.

FEB. 14, 1989: Government and UCC make \$470-mn deal.

OCT. 3, 1991: Supreme Court upholds settlement.

victims. Apparently ucc is also considering setting up the hospital. The company has already deposited the \$470million with the Supreme Court. But nobody can tell when and how it will get to those whose lives were forever altered that night in 1984.—N.K. SINGH

Workers' Ire

Nivogi killing sparks unrest



THE unknown assassins who pumped bullets into a sleeping Shankar Guha Niyogi last month only stoked the fires of confrontation between his trade

union movement and the industrialists in the Chhattisgarh region.

Although the workers have remained peaceful, tension is palpable in the Durg-Bhilai industrial belt. Even when factories reopened last fortnight after six days' closure, the authorities

kept their fingers crossed. Says industrialist Kallash Pati: "The disciplined trade union has become a mob.'

Predictably, industrialists scared. Some are not moving about freely. K.P. Kedia of the Kedia group has sent his family away from Bhilai. Savs he: "The workers far outnumber us."

They fear the wrath of Niyogi's supporters. His wife

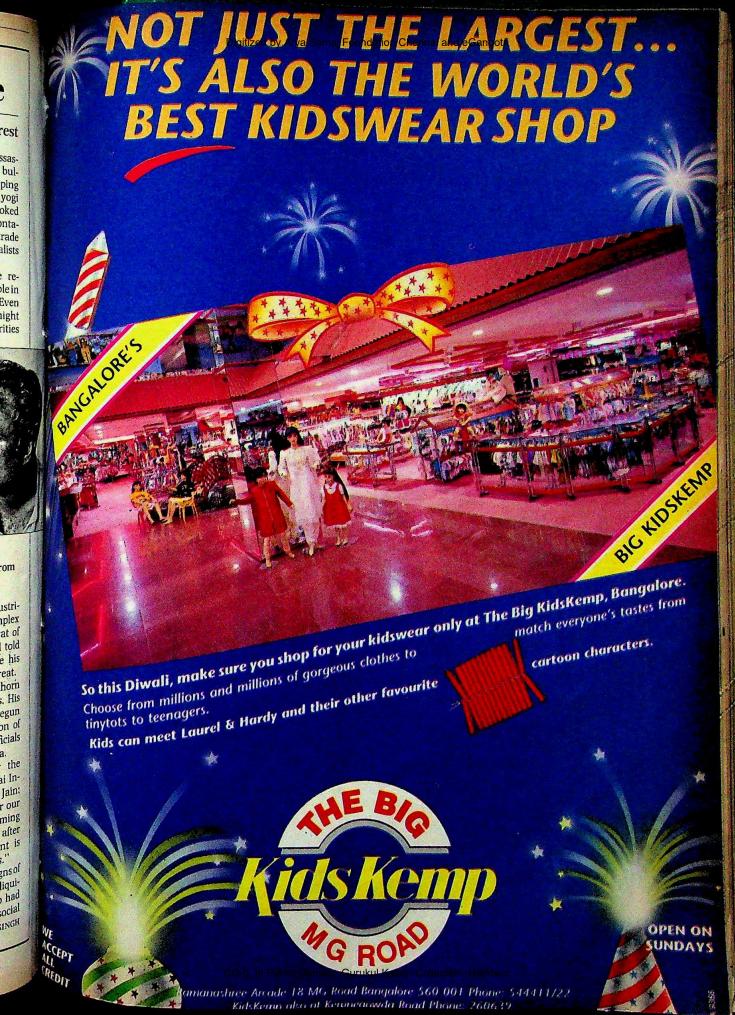


has accused nine prominent industrialists including Kedia, the Simplex group's Shahs and H.P. Khetawat of Bhilai Wires. Niyogi himself had told INDIA TODAY a few hours before his death that his life was under threat.

Apparently, he was proving a thorn in the flesh of some industrialists. His Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha had begun campaigning against the violation of labour laws. So they influenced officials in a bid to ban him from the area.

But the industrialists deny the charges of complicity. Says Bhilai Industries Association chief B.R. Jain: "We welcome any probe to clear our names." The case is clearly becoming politicised. Alleged V.P. Singh after visiting Durg: "The Government is trying to shield the industrialists."

Evidently, these are the first signs of far-reaching repercussions of the liquidation of a towering leader who had combined trade unionism with social -N.K. SINGH reforms.



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DEVI LAL Comeback Bid

The Tau seeks new allies

N hibernation for the last three months, the Tau has pulled himself Lup from his charpoy and is waking up to the political world around him. And as is his hallmark, the former deputy prime minister is surprising and scaring people around him by his sudden flurry of activity.

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RSCO-IN

Hedid just that when he surfaced in Rombay to meet the most unlikely of compatriots—Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray. Next, he had Bhajan Lal worried over his decision to launch the Haryana Bachao Abhiyan to protest the anti-people policies of the Congress(I) Government. And he created a flutter in the Chandra Shekhar camp by floating rumours that he might resign as president of Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP) and start a regional party. "I don't know which party I am the president of." he says. "First we were the Janata Dal(S), then we became SJP, and Subramanian Swamy says his is still the Janata Party.'

Now, the Tau has his strategy all chalked out to stage a comeback in Haryana. On November 1, he is likely to announce the formation of a new party at Jind and launch a 'Save Haryana' movement. Aides say he is admitting in private that he should never have handed over the state to son, Om Prakash Chautala. And at a meeting of state spe legislators, Devi Lal was told to keep his sons out of politics. At the same time, he is trying to wean away some disgruntled Congress(I) Jat MLAs. He recently met state PCC(1) chief Birender Singh, and sent feelers through son Ranjeet Singh to arch rival Bansi Lal. Ranjeet and Bansi Lal even visited Brahi viilage in Bahadurgarh which was the scene of recent police atrocities.

Devi Lal is extracting maximum mileage from the people's disenchantment with the Bhajan Lal Government. He is also playing up the deteriorating law and order situation and the

police revolt in the state. Said Devi Lal contemptuously: "Bhajan Lal koi sarkar thodi na chala raha hai." (There is no governance under Bhajan Lal.)

Devi Lal professes that he alone can save the "The Concountry. gress(I) has been reduced to a minority, the BJP is a party of traders, and if the communists could not survive in Russia, what future can they have here?" he asserts.

It is this conviction that took him to Bal Thackeray. The two decided to form a farmerindustrial workers front, and address rallies jointly. Devi Lal is also counting on the Save Haryana Movement's izzat bachao

(save honour) slogan sweeping the state like the nyaya yudh (war for justice) did in the mid-'80s. Only this time, the mood is not quite right for a movement. As one of his own party MLAs said: "Haryana's honour

really suffered during Chautala-Devi Lal's reign. How can they now go to the field and claim to be the saviours?" Besides, his associates who made the nyaya yudh successful are all now in rival parties.

A major hurdle in the way of his comeback will be Chautala who, aides say, the Tau is almost scared of. If Chautala disagrees. Devi Lal will neither float a new party nor contest an assembly seat as he is now contemplating. And this could really be his undo-



ing. Devi Lal must realise that for Haryanvis now-on whom he's pinning his hopes-he is not the Tau any more, but he is Chautala's father.

-HARINDER BAWEJA with ARUN KATIYAR in Bombay

HARYANA POLICE

Up in Arms

THE Bhajan Lal Government was buffeted by waves of revolt last fortnight. With its 27,000strong Haryana constabulary going on a batons-down strike for a week, theentirestatemachinery

came to a grinding halt. Among the Haryana Police Sangathan's demands: ration money. uniform allowance, more houses and a special ex

Policemen on dharna

gratia grant. Though the Government has met these demands, the police aren't satisfied. They also want a raise in their basic salary and the recognition of their sangathan.

The state's Director-General of Police, Kalyan Rudra, claims the policemen have resumed their duties. But even two days after Bhajan Lal had acceded some of the sangathan's demands, the constables from Rohtak's Police Line were still agitating. Although large arrests were made and the CRPF was called in to quell the revolt, the sangathan is determined. Says Balbir Singh Yadav, Rohtak district secretary: "We are not scared of losing our jobs. The Government is only forcing us to turn into militants."

> Unusually, even the chief minister agrees their grievances are genuine. While the rebellious police force may be lying low for the moment, it is just a matter of time before they are up in arms again.

> > -HARINDER BAWEJA



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RESERVATIONS

Sneak Victory

Congress(I) steals a march

OR a while, the Mandal monster threatened to trigger off another horrific bout of violence as the Janata Dal concentrated on its obsessive issue. But apart from sporadic demonstrations, the agitation petered out tamely for lack of the main incendiary this time-political support. Credit for that clearly goes to the wily Narasimha Rao who stole the thunder by announcing job reservations for the socially and educationally backward

during next month's by-elections, especially in the seven constituencies of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, where the Janata Dal is still a force. Little wonder then that Janata Dal leaders are trying to detract from the ruling party's sneak victory. Says V.P. Singh: "Why is the Government trying to divide the backward castes in the name of giving preference to the poor among them?"

Bihar Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav, finding his grip over the backwards slipping, dubbed the Central Government's move "unconstitutional." The extra-backward classes who will benefit from it, however, feel vindicated after what they say was an unfair

Anti-Mandal demonstration in Delhi



based on economic criteria.

With crucial by-elections coming up in mid-November, the Congress(I)'s move was obviously electorally motivated. And it forced the Janata Dal on the defensive. At the same time, the Congress(I) is deliberately complicating the implementation of its quota policy, to take the steam out of the anti-Mandal agitation. The Supreme Court's stand that the Governmentdefined economic criteria will delay introduction of the quotas in the civil services is one clear pointer. Further, the Government will consult all chief ministers and constitute a new panel to identify the poor among the backward and forward castes. Then there may be another all-party meet, after which the Supreme Court will constitute a fresh bench to decide whether job quotas can cross the 50 per cent constitutional limit.

For now. however, the Congress(I) is hoping to reap an electoral harvest

promotion of the Yadavs, Kurmis, Keoris and Banias by Yadav's Government. The Uttar Pradesh Government is also doing its best to smother any lingering embers from last year. Last fortnight, the Government said its repromulgated ordinance-first passed during Mulayam Singh Yadav's tenure-would not be implemented pending the judgement of the Allahabad High Court.

But many in Uttar Pradesh are not convinced, Students in Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra and Meerut have organised occasional road blocks. There have also been sporadic student protests in Punjab. Haryana, Rajasthan and Karnataka. In New Delhi, Dusu President Rajeev Goswami-the hero of last year's Mandal agitation-ruled out self-immolation. And without backing from any political party, the Mandal tiger has clearly lost its teeth-for now.

-ZAFAR AGHA

KARNATAKA

Touch and Go

Bangarappa survives, barely



WHILE the Karnataka Assembly was in session, Chief Minister S. Bangarappa managed to keep himself afloat in the swirling whirlpool of dissi-

dence. But only just. With the budget session concluded, party rebels are once again clamouring for his head

And on October 2 when Congress(I) President P.V. Narasimha Rao arrived in Bangalore, they were certain his fate was sealed. But the high command is adopting an ostrich-like approach to the vexing problem. Said Narasimha Rao: "I would respect

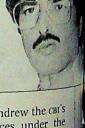
those who didn't carry their problems to Delhi.'

The dissidents' main plank is corruption and Bangarappa's failure to fulfil the various housing, medical and old age pension schemes promised. While the charges multiply, last fortnight Bangarappa drove the last nail into his own coffin. Without consult-

ing his cabinet, he withdrew the CBI'S power to probe offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act. Rural Development Minister K.H. Patil wrote a letter lambasting Bangarappa: "The impression created is the Government is afraid to act against corruption. Bangarappa was defensive: "What I did was legally sound."

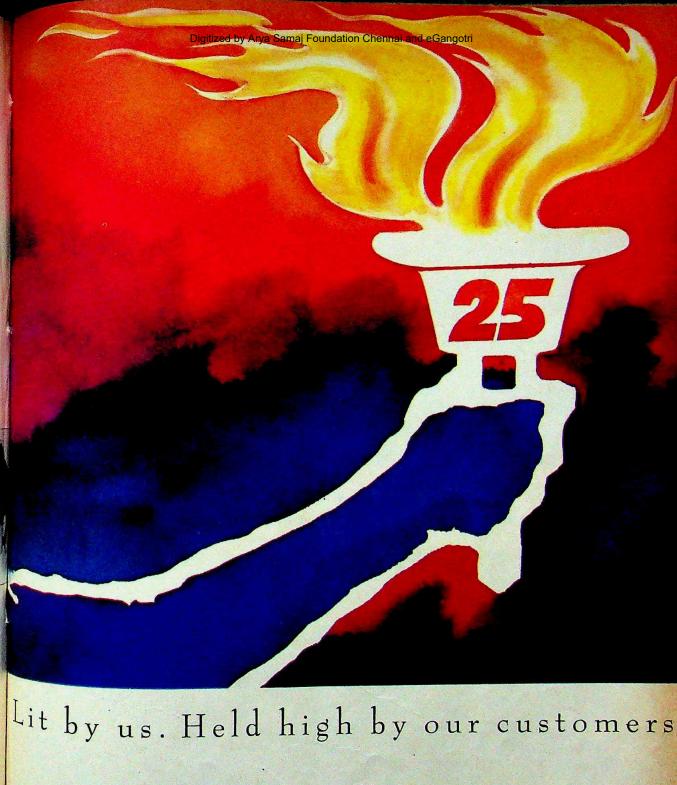
Meanwhile, rebels launched their "final assault" by submitting a memorandrum to the high command—the third in the last two months and plan another trip to Delhi. Says rebel leader K.N. Nagegowda: "A majority of the 181 MLAs want a no-confidence motion against Bangarappa." But the high command prefers an honourable exit for him. Meanwhile, the Vidhana Soudha is abuzz with rumours of who will step into his shoes: Veerendra Patil, K.H. Patil or M. Veerappa Moily. As for Bangarappa, dissidents count his days as numbered.

—SARITHA RAI



Bangarappa:

numbered days



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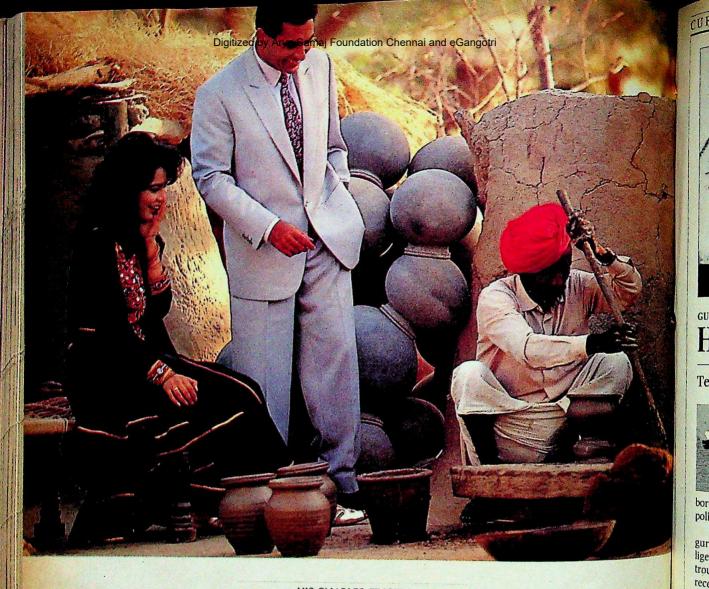
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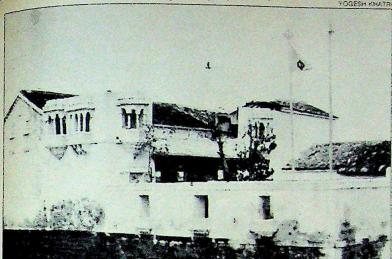
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GUJARAT

Holy Row

Tension builds up at shrine



HAVING singed its fingers in Punjab once, the Government is taking no chances this time. With dreaded Sikh terrorists using the Kutch

border to cross over into Pakistan, the police are cracking down hard.

Their first target: a medieval gurdwara near the Lakhpat Fort. Intelligence agencies suspect it is a potential trouble-spot. With the Kutch police recently busting an espionage racket and arresting four persons including a Pakistani national, Junas Dosal, their suspicions have gained ground. In the last two months the police have also seized over 120 unlicensed weapons from people on the border.

A tussle is on for possession of the gurdwara—regarded as one of Guru Nanak's first seats. The contenders: some members of the Udhasi sect which has looked after the shrine for over 400 years, the state Government, and the local Sikhs along with Sikh officers from the military base at Bhuj. Says Kutch police chief P.K. Jha: "It is in everybody's interest that the Government take over its possession. It's a potential trouble-spot."

Moreover, the 250-odd Sikh famlies settled on the border live under the shadow of suspicion. Last year, terrorists Resham Singh and Balwant Singh admitted to crossing over to Pakistan from the Kutch border. As they were sheltered by a local Sikh farmer, the

The controversial gurdwara

Sikhs are trying to allay any fears the Government may have. Says Harnam Singh Digwa, president of Bhuj's Sri Guru Nanak Singh Sabha: "The Government's apprehensions about the gurdwara's misuse are misplaced." The police are battling the locals for control of the disputed gurdwara, despite Digwa's assurance that they "ensure it doesn't become a base for questionable elements from Punjab".

Meanwhile, Nanak's legacy continues to be a disputed one.

-UDAY MAHURKAR

TAMIL NADU

High Handed

Jayalalitha rides roughshod



SHE isn't one to forgive and forget that easily. And Chief Minister Jayalalitha has hammered the point home in the 100 days she's been in office.

The latest victim of her sharpened claws is former AIADMK legislator K.P. Ramalingam. Last fortnight the police arrested him for pushing Jayalalitha off the gun carriage carrying MGR's body in 1987. The case was dismissed since no chargesheet was filed within two years of the complaint, but the chief minister has petitioned the high court.

The first head to roll was of K. Nagarajan, former chief minister M. Karunanidhi's home secretary. After being dumped from office, Nagarajam wasarrested as the main accused in the case relating to attack on the Familia

fortnightly Tharasu's office.

And Jayalalitha's fury knew no bounds when DMK spokesman Aladi Aruna alleged the Government had authorised the tapping of opposition leaders' phones. Aruna was sued for defamation and the editor, publisher and reporter of Nakkeeran—the weekly carrying the report—were arrested.

The list of negatives on her score card is endless. She has hacked away at welfare schemes begun by the DMK and even suspended the Adi Dravida housing scheme. launched by Karunanidhi. More importantly, a criminal charge filed against TNCC(1) chief V.K. Ramamurthy has been withdrawn.

But there is also a plus side. Her major achievement is the crackdown on the LTTE. She has announced welfare measures to raise the morale of the state police. On the industrial front, she has opened loss-making public sector

SHARAD SAXENA



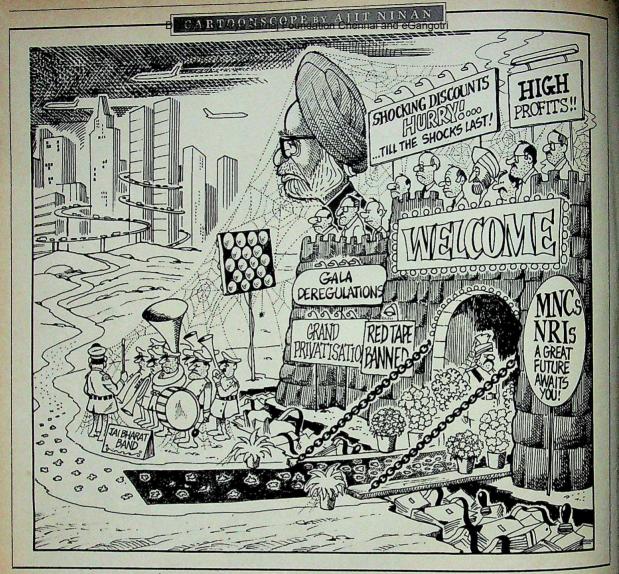
Jayalalitha: vindictive streak

companies to private investment.

Not surprisingly, the chief minister's supporters will bend backwards—or rather forwards—to keep her happy. Most telling was Education Minister R.M. Veerappan's statement "If it is said that the Government has a 1.000 days, our puratchi selvi (revolutionary daughter) has 10,000 eyes."

Critics say Jayalalitha is Intolerant of dissent. Her response: "I've always taken criticism in my stride. In fact, some ministers in my cabinet had slandered me once." Her partymen dismissalicharges ofher high-handedness. Says Health Minister S. Muthusamy: "She consults all of us before taking a decision."

Ultimately, it's always the modam's whites that win. —KAVITHA SHETTY



SIGN POSTS

TAKEN OVER: the presidency of the UN Security Council by India, repre-



sented by Ambassador C.R. Gharekhan. India's turn in the chair comes at a time when several important issues are to be discussed. Most important among them:

selection of the new secretary-general.

PROPOSED: to be banned, Ajino moto, the flavour booster in biscuits. noodles and Chinese food. The 'Chinese salt' or monosodium glutamate, consumer groups quoting recent studies claim, has caused brain damage in children below 12. Most developed countries have already banned this edible chemical.

WON: by the Narmada Bachao Andolan, led by Medha Patkar, jointly with three other international groups, the Right Livelihood Award considered the Nobel equivalent in ecology protection. The award instituted by Swedish-German writer Jacob Von Uexkul carries a prize money of \$170,000 (Rs 44.2 lakh).

FILED: a suit by Gajraben Chaudhary challenging her husband. Amarsinh

Chaudhary's marriage to Nisha Gamit, daughter of an Adivasi Congress(I) leader. The wife of the former chief minister of Gujarat has named her husband and his 'second wife' respondents in the lawsuit.



SURPASSED: by Jyoti Basu the previous record for being the longest-

serving chief minister of West Bengal, by having completed 14 years in office in October this year. This distinction was earlier held by Dr Bidhan Chandra Roy, the



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state's second chief minister.

RECLAIMED: by the Reserve Bank of India, 47 tonnes of gold pledged to the Bank of England and the Bank of Japan during the foreign exchange crisis in July. However, the gold will not be brought back as the RBI does not want to lose out on the interest, that too in foreign exchange. But the tonnage is now free of charges on it.

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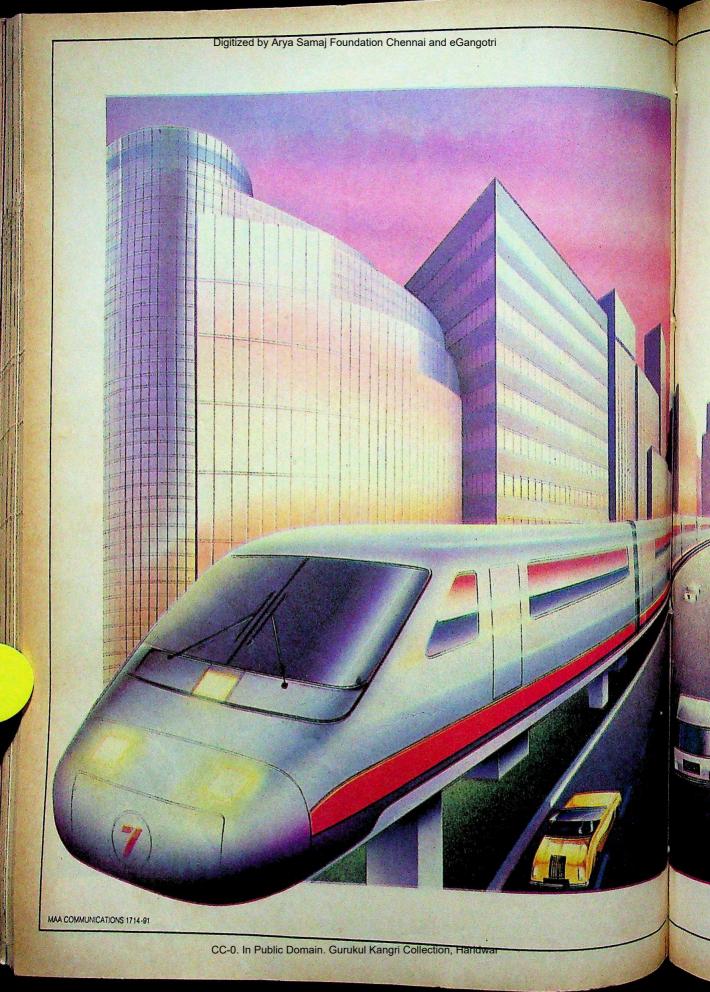
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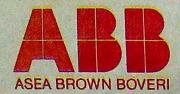
This is only the beginning. ABB has a substantial role to play as India steps into the 21st century.

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A Baron With Bite

N the marshlands of Asian media, India is often identified as a high I ground, where the flag of press freedom is still held aloft despite onslaughts from people in authority. Much of the credit for this goes to a few individuals who have consistently

fought to maintain the independence of the print media. Without doubt among newspaper proprietors Ramnath Goenka, chairman of the Indian Express Group of Publications. who died in Bombay on October 5, aged 87, was the valiant standardbearer for a free press.

Goenka's early years were hardly the kind which produce pioneering press lords. Born in a Marwari business family in Bihar on April 18, 1904, he was educated at Kashi Vidyapeeth and inducted into the family trading business in Calcutta. But the restless Goenka soon set off for Madras and there forged a courageous, even if contradictory, role as a newspaper publisher with the launch of the Indian Express in 1932.

During the freedom struggle, Goenka joined the Congress, became a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, discarded his suits for khadi, and laid the foundations of a publishing empire built on defiance

of authority. Yet he kept a leg in the establishment, whether as a member of the Madras Legislative Council nominated by the British government or of the Congress Party. "My paper was born as a Congress paper, but I never took a party line," he maintained.

His finest hour came after Mrs Gandhi declared an Emergency and introduced press censorship in 1975. Goenka was among the few newspaper publishers who refused to surrender. When elections were later announced in 1977, his penthouse atop Bombay's 27-storey Express Tower became a hub

of political activity, with Janata Party leaders gathering there to devise

It was a role he revelled in. For Goenka was also a doughty political player, a quality which kept him engrossed in his publishing business even

strategies with him.

language publications.

But the old warhorse could not institutionalise the qualities which made him an exceptional press baron in his own organisation. Like a badlytuned sports car, the Express would roar to life only when Goenka installed

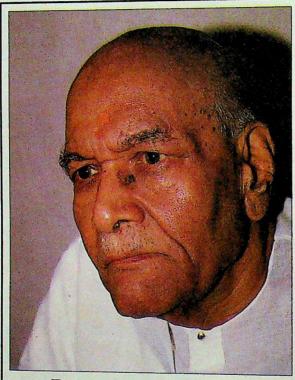
one of his combative editors, like Arun Shourie, in the driving seat.

A mercurial personality, he was also full of contradictions and not the kind of newspaper proprietor who could create a stable and professional organisation. Though he fought for democratic values, his personal style was autocratic, often alienating even senior and capable editors. He was notorious for his colourful vocabulary, which he utilised freely.

He was financially shrewd, investing well in real estate and stocks, but his papers and jourwere often nalists strapped for cash. After the premature death of his son B.D. Goenka, the question of who would inherit control of the Express Group remained unanswered. Earlier this year, Goenka adopted his eldest daughter's son, Vivek, as his son and successor. This put paid to the ambitions of daughter-in-law his Saroj Goenka, and two

other grandsons from another daughter, Joint Managing Director Manoj Sonthalia and brother Anil, and led to speculation of a corporate family feud. But a board meeting shortly before Goenka's death suggests the succession will be peaceful—Vivek was appointed managing director of all English and other language editions after a resolution proposed by Saroj.

As the new generation takes over, there is little doubt that Goenka's death marks a turning point in the history of one of India's most influential publishing -M. RAHMAN ing groups.



RAMNATH GOENKA 1904-1991

after he suffered a stroke three years ago. After the Emergency, Goenka's crusading zeal spilled over into several Express campaigns against Indira Gandhi and her son Sanjay, former Maharashtra chief minister A.R. Antulay, Reliance Industries and its Chairman Dhirubhai Ambani, Amitabh Bachchan and brother Ajitabh, and finally Rajiv Gandhi and the scandalous Bofors gun deal. This period also saw the rapid growth of the Indian Express Group in size and influence countrywide, with 14 editions of the English language daily, and several Indian

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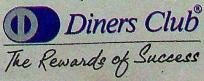
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Cocking Militant Snook

The support for Kashmiri militants is now blatantly out in the open discovered the INDIA TODAY team, the first journalists to visit training and refugee camps in POK.

By KANWAR SANDHU in POK

UTWALLI is 13. He should be safely ensconced in a schoolroom in his native Baramula district, boning up on history. Instead, housed in Raru Ambore camp near the Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) capital, Muzaffarabad, for the past 10 months, he has been dreaming of altering the course of Kashmir's turbulent waters. "I will join the mujahedin," says he.

Mutwalli's childhood ended last year when he was detained for a few days by the Indian Army. He is one of the new breed of mohajirs (migrants)—at least half of them are youths and many have come without family members—who have been trickling in from the Valley since early last year. after the Indian Army stepped up its drive to check infiltration by Pakistani-trained militants.

In рок, the sabre has never rattled louder. Posters screaming "Na guerrilla jang, na qaumi jang—al jehad, al jehad" (It is neither a guerrilla nor a national war-it is a holy war) plaster most of the walls in the capital. Support to Kashmiri militants is more blatant. Outside the Hizbul Mujahedin office sit a dozen armed militants. One of them introduces himself as 'defence commander' Mohammad Ashraf Laya. As intelligence officials accompanying us fret, he tells us with chilling

frankness: "I put to death many traitors." Hizbul's next targets, he says, will be in areas other than Jammu & Kashmir. Also in Muzaffarabad, at the office of a senior government official, sits a well-dressed young man. He is Amir Khan, the chief of a newly-sprouted militant organisation, Saldai Allah O' Akbar. It is not his

real name but he is among the 12 magistrates dismissed by Jagmohan when he was governor of

PAKISTAN

Jammu & Kashmir, He refuses to be photographed. "I will meet you in your country," he says.

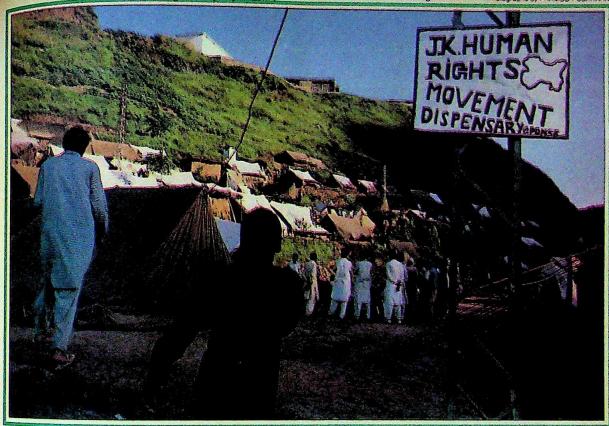
Many mohajirs say they fled the Valley because of repeated arrests for organising pro-azadi demonstrations, And a few admit their involvement in militancy. Most of the migrations took place last year, but the exodus continues. On September 1, 14 people from Karna village in Kupwara crossed the Rubicon, and made their home in a new camp in Karka Pataka, 25 km from Muzaffarabad. Most are chary of being captured on film because they fear harassment of relatives back home. Some, like Bashir Bhutt, who was an employeein the Forest Department, are sorry they left. But, as he says: "The past three years were unbearable. Jagmohan gave us the impression that the Government wanted our land, not us."

Here, however, they feel they are wanted. Seven camps have been set up for them, the latest at Hathian, opposite Uri. where 70 families have moved in. In the case of Kainthawali village on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), almost all the inhabitants seem to have come across. Life here couldn't be more comfortable. Thanks to the Muslim Conference Government, they have water, electricity, schools as well as prayer rooms. The Government gives each of them Rs 12 a day, apart from an initial, one-time grant. This works out to about Rs 22 lakh a month—quite a drain on the exchequer. Secretary of the Kashmir Liberation Cell Rashid Malik says they don't encourage people to cross over but their actions speak differently.

In the camps, there is pervasive despair at being dislocated,

but not enough to crush a reassertion of the rhythm of life. At Ambore camp, for instance, Abid Hussain Shah, 17, is married to Nazir Fatima. 16-both were engaged a Parachinar Dopatt ISLAMABAD CONTROL JAMMU & KASHMIF Rajauri RECENT FIRING REFUGEE CAMPS

Diagram by B K. SHARMA



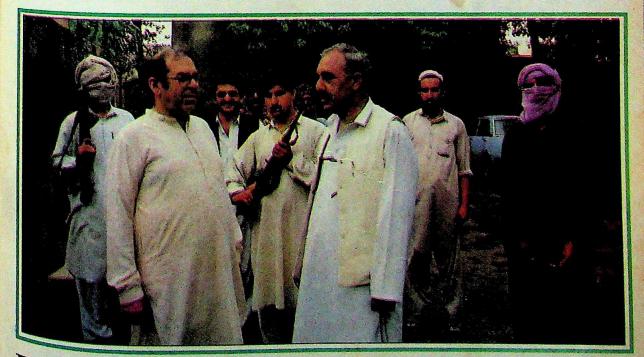
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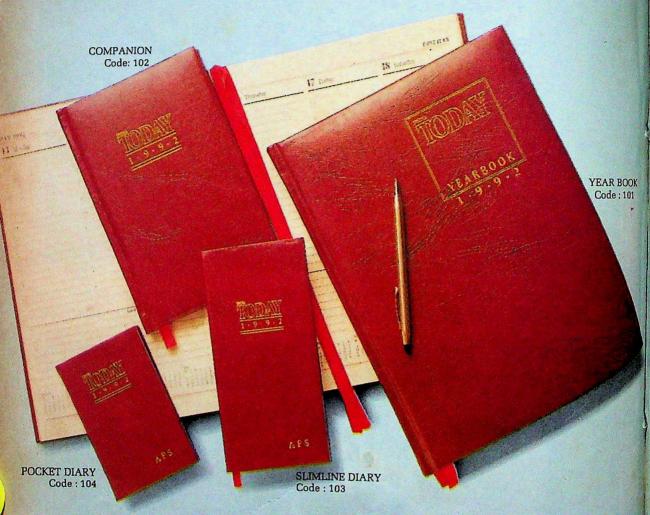
What was a trickle has now become a flood and semi-permanent camps have been set up to house the migrants, who bring with them exaggerated tales of army atrocities.



F^{arooq} Haider, who broke away from Amanullah Khan, along with Rasheed Hasrat of the JKLF armed wing, openly runs a militant headquarters in Rawalpindi.

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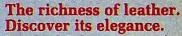
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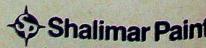


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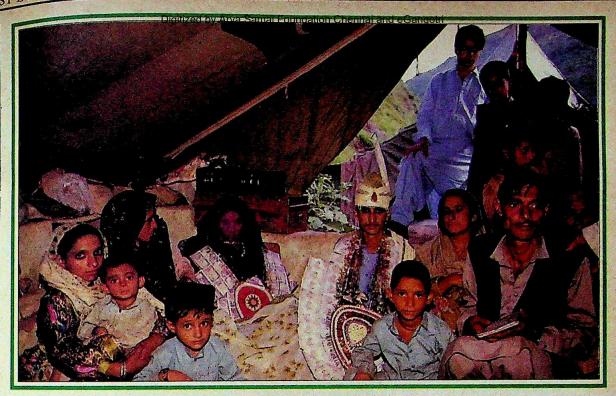




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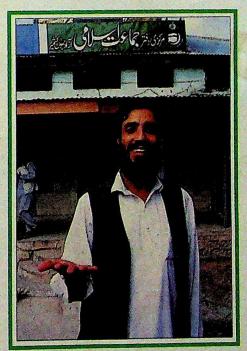


t Ambore camp, Abid Hussain Shah, 17, is married to Nazir Fatima, 16. The At Ambore camp, Ablu Hussull Shall, 17, is made are still in Kashmir. rejoicing is subdued because many of their relatives are still in Kashmir.

year ago in Baramula. The rejoicing is subdued. "Because many relatives are still in Indian Kashmir," says Abid's father.

There are a few fond remembrances of their days in India, but the bitterness soon boils over. "Why should I go back?" asks Bibi Maryan, 35, of Ambore camp. She says she and her family had to flee Kainthawali because of the army. Her litany of charges is all-toofamiliar: her husband was tortured while she was repeatedly raped by Indian troops for an entire week. Pointing to the deep scar on her forehead, she says: "I was hit on the head when I protested." Equally jarring is the story of Abdul Rashid Mir, 40, also of Ambore. He claims he was picked up by the army and administered electric shocks. "I shall go back only when that area is free," he now says.

But if the increasingly frequent exchange of fire between the Indian and Pakistani sides on the LAC is any indication, this face-off will continue for a while. To stem infiltration, Indian troops have been concentrating their firepower on traffic along Kel road in Tithwal sector. And this pro-



Nohammed Ashraf Laya, LVI defence commander of Hizbul Mujahiden and one of the most wanted men in India, proudly poses for photographs.

longed war of attrition has left its mark. Parts of some towns, like Athmagam, have been reduced to a heap of rubble. As Mir Gul Bahar, an Athmagam farmer, puts it: "Most families here have had to shift because of almost daily firing. Even the tehsil headquarters have been moved to Kundal Shahi." But the Pakistan Government prefers to cover these wounds of war with grease-paint. The face it shows to the world is one where the refugee came are a model of the good life. Signacantly, Sir John Wheeler, a British MP, was among the recent visitors to the Ambore camp.

While the refugees' enforced exit from their homes in the Valley evokes sympathy, some of the accounts seem designed to lubricate tear ducts and set moneybags jangling. The tale of Fazal-ur-Rahman Lone, 40, seems particularly unsavoury. The former resident of Sudpura village in Kupwara says the Indian Army wanted him to stop offering namaz. "When I refused, they chopped off my leg with a butcher's knife." Others from Karka Pataka camp talk of being forced to shave their beards. The facts don't matter. In

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Cut out this cartoon and display it on your board. Then watch for reactions. Would you be surprised if people saw some of their colleagues in the picter.

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DISSENT:
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Pakistan and 'Azad Kashmir theired by Arva Samaj Foundation C claims are taken as gospel.

But as in Salome's dance, there are many layers to unveil. What the ever-watchful Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) allows one to see is only that covered by the first veil. This is quite evident in the obstacles put in the way of our proposed visit to Athmagam, Prime Minister of 'Azad Kashmir' Sardar Abdul Oavyum Khan is keen that we witness the civilian damage wrought there by Indian shelling. But the 1s1 is discouraging. We realise the reason for their wariness later: there are two militant training camps on the road to Athmagam.

In fact, it is along the Jhelum valley, towards Chakothi, traversing the entire area between the villages of Garhi and Dopatta, that the heart of militancy throbs. We find out about the training camps when a group of Garhi villagers, whom we run into at a Rawalpindi newspaper office, ask us in all innocence: "Why don't you visit the mujahedin camps near our village?" Then follows a graphic description of four camps on the outskirts of Garhi and Dopatta.



The Jamaat leaders believe **L** in taking Kashmir by the sword, although there are others who want to avert war.

Run by the ISI, they house 800 gotembers drawn from four militant groups—Hizbul Mujahedin, JKIF Muslim Jaanbaz Force and Muslim Students' Federation.

Ahead of Garhi-Dopatta is another camp at Loonbagla, run by the Jamaat-e-Islami. This, say sources. is also a breeding ground for disinformation. And its products are devious concoctions of photographs and video shots smuggled out of the Valley, liberally mixed with scenes contrived with the help of a Rawalpindi-based photographer. Stoking further the flames of secessionism are leaflets and booklets on alleged atrocities in the Valley.

But it is in the North-West Frontier Province that the real action takes place. Toyota and Pajerojeeps transport militants to Parachinar for arms training under the tutelage of 1s1 handlers and mujahedin. And when they have to be initiated into battle, the militants are taken to Peshawar and Afghanistan, Government officials own up to the existence of the camps, but only in private. Others like Jamaat Assistant General Secretary Savhir

THE IKLF

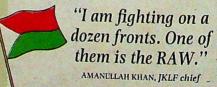
Diminishing Sway

NCREASINGLY irrelevant in Jammu & Kashmir, where fundamentalist groups are riding high, the JKLF finds itself cut adrift from its moorings in Pakistan too. Craving a better deal from the Muslim Conference (MC) Government in 'Azad Kashmir', its cadres feel slighted by its perceived stepmotherly treatment. The frustration manifested itself in June, when JKLF workers attacked a newly-opened restaurant of an MC worker in Muzaffarabad. The following night, 25 tents of the MC youth wing, in the Garhi-Dopatta training camp, were burnt down. JKLF workers were accused of arson and camp officials made them pay for it.

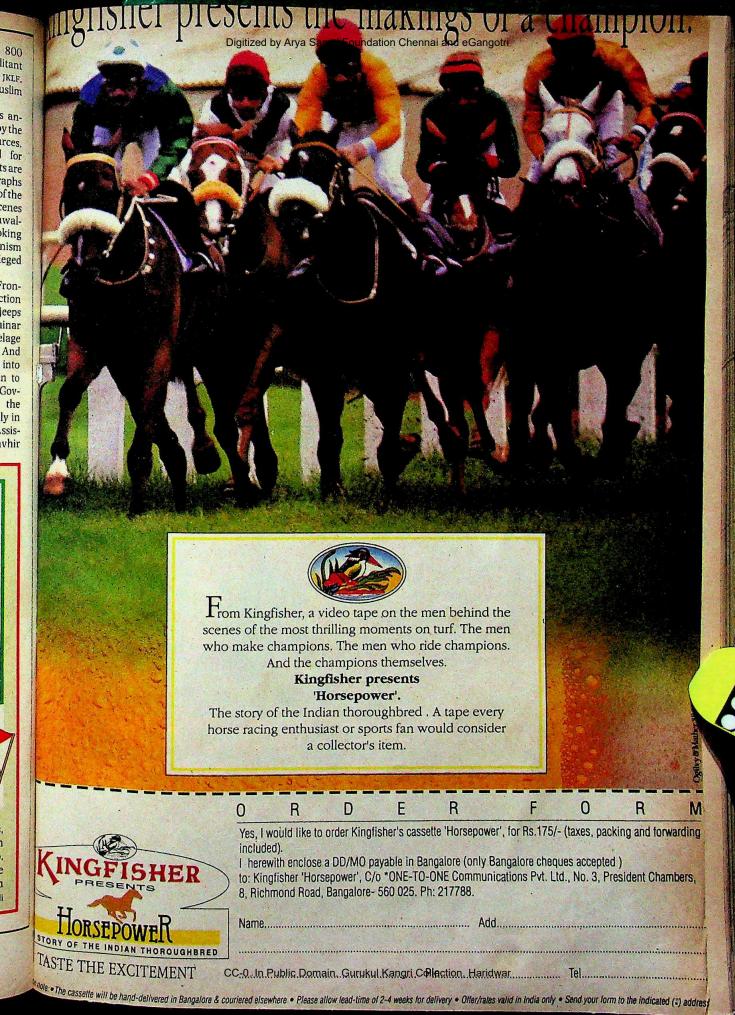
In Rawalpindi, the situation is no better. JKLF's top leaders are under physical threat. The chief, Amanullah Khan, agreed to meet us in a restaurant—his office and home were ruled out. He spoke with candour: "I am fighting on a dozen fronts. One of them happens to be the RAW." He rapped the Pakistan Government for having closed the door on the third alternative: independent Kashmir. Ever since Pakistan turned against them, he said, gefting weapons has been tough.

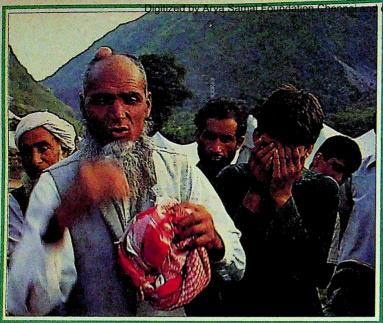
The disarray in JKLF ranks has demoralised workers in the Valley. Recently, a student group switched allegiance to a fundamentalist group. But Khan is putting up a brave front. "We have suffered greatly, but the process of rejuvenation is on," he said. If Farooq Haider, who has broken away from Khan, is to be





believed, he is already in touch with Sikh militants, especially of the Babbar Khalsa. There are signs that Khan is looking farther afield in case help from Pakistan dries up. It could be all too soon as Pakistani authorities have already decided that the horse to back is the one draped in fundamentalist livery. —KANWAR SANDHU in Rawalpindi





Each refugee has his own tale of woe but the younger ones are camera-shy for fear of being identified.

Oamar query: "What is wrong in Gangottle camps in Azad Kashmir? This too is part of Kashmir."

Many in POK hope that the 'excesses' of the Indian Army will trigger a revolt among the Muslims in the Valley. The Jamaat still believes in taking Kashmir by the sword, but others in POK want to avert a war with India, which even Sardar Qayyum believes is a distinct possibility. Says he: "Even if India is forced to agree to a solution, it would like to wage war as a parting kick."

Others in POK feel that international opinion will force the Indian Government to abide by the UN resolutions on plebiscite. But in Pakistan, there has been a break in the constant chant for plebiscite. Even Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif says: "The UN resolutions should form the basis of talks but fresh ideas which come up across the table should also be discussed." Yet, the chasm separating the two nations involved in this bitter struggle is wide. And shows no signs of being bridged.

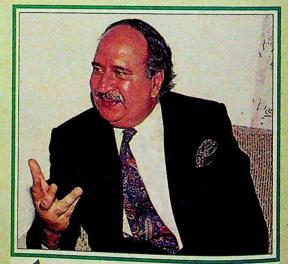
POK POLITICS

Mocking a Mandate

OSTERS of former prime minister of 'Azad Kashmir', Raja Mumtaz Rathore, crowd the walls of the Pok capital, Muzaffarabad. Declaring that the elections to the Pok Assembly were rigged, Rathore had raised a storm in July when he threatened war against Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The crisis, arising out of his controversial dismissal by the Pakistan Government three months ago, has still not blown over.

That there is a lull which has been manoeuvred by Rathore's successor, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, is evident from Rathore's wife, Farhat, contesting a by-election from Haveli constituency last month. The chief secretary and police chief of 'Azad Kashmir', whom Rathore had sacked, continue in office. Yet, three months after elections to the Assembly, none of the nine opposition members have taken oath. Says a close aide of the former prime minister: "He is lying low for now."

There are other cracks in the edifice of POK unity.
The Peoples' National Party (PNP) of POK, headed by
Qurban Ali Khan, is opposed to Kashmir's accession to
Pakistan. The reason: Punjabis rule the roost in POK.
Along with the J&K Liberation League, the PNP is popular
in Mirpur. Then, Northern Areas—comprising Gilgit,
Hunza, Jalkot, Chitral, Dir and Bunji—administered
directly by the Pakistan Government, are the subject of a
legal battle. While one group has moved the local high
court to declare the area a part of 'Azad Kashmir', another
wants the Lahore High Court to proclaim it a province of
Pakistan. Even the Muslim Conference has demanded

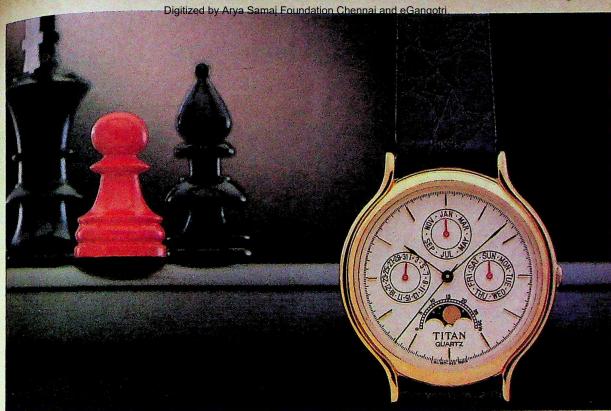


"I will not give in to a government formed through rigged elections."

MUMTAZ RATHORE, former prime minister of Azad Kashmir

that the area, which often witnesses sectarian clashes, be merged with Pok. But Nawaz Sharif brushes aside the winds of dissent: "Unlike India, weren't we able to hold peaceful elections in Azad Kashmir?" But rifts are never so carefully measured as when they occur in a land that promises freedom.

—KANWAR SANDHU in Muzaffarabad



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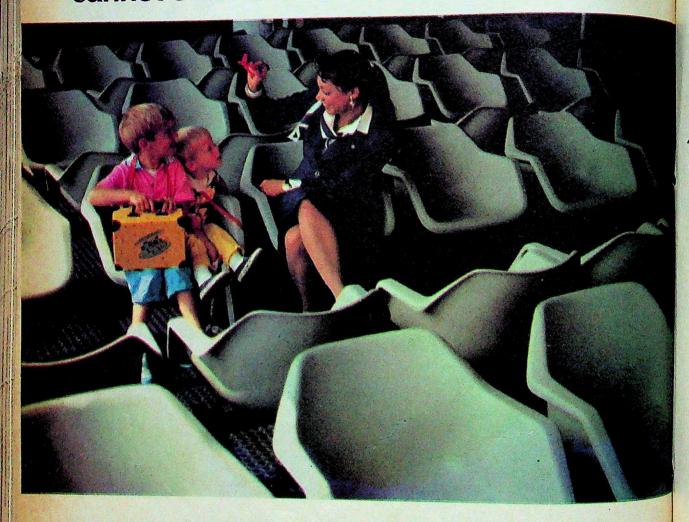
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Quiet Killin

Mostly unknown and unregarded, business has never been better in West Bengal's low-profile fireworks industry.

By SOUTIK BISWAS



FIRECRACKERS and Sivakasi. For as long as anyone can remember, people have equated this southern Tamil Nadu town with quality, massmarketed firecrackers

which are sold all over the country.

And for just as long, a cluster of villages around Calcutta and few outlying districts have worked a similar trade. It is mostly unknown and unre-

garded, but the scale is large enough to rake in at least Rs 10 crore a year in sales, and provide employment to about 2,000 impoverished families who switch to making firecrackers between the two harvesting seasons. "We don't have skilled workers as in Sivakasi to make fancy fireworks.' says 30-year-old Priya Lal Das; partner of Hindustan Fireworks Limited in Balarampur village, 25 km south of Calcutta, "but our products are just as good."

The business is concentrated mainly in the Budge Budge-Maheshtala belt of the South 24 Parganas district—Balarampur is in this area-which has 18 of the state's 29 registered factories. The remainder are split between Hooghly. Howrah and Nadia districts. Mostly, the business is in the nature of a cottage industry, with Calcuttabased wholesalers or local factory owners farming out work to households.

The industry is now about a century old in the belt. It all began with the Bengal zamindars, many of whom manufactured fireworks at home for use during festivals. In particular,

for Kali Puja, which coincides with Diwali in the rest of the country. Gradually, the practice died out, along

with zamindars, and the mass-market approach never really caught on in Bengal. But it did in the Sivakasi area, where the trade was-and is-far more organised and aggressive. Smallscale manufacture continued in the state, but it was only 20 years ago that Bengal manufacturers began to compete in the market-place with the Sivakasi brands. And sometimes, it

Inside a fireworks factory

Taking Sivakasi on with both quality and price, the West Bengal business rakes in Rs 10 crore a year in sales.

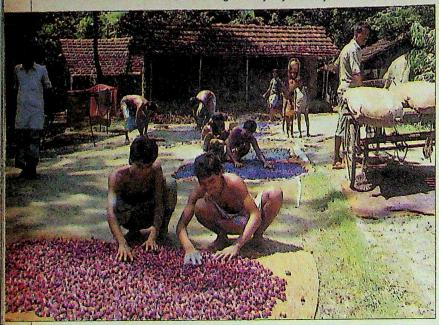
was the zamindar's descendants who carried on the practice. Sheikh Mojhar Ali, for instance. Sixty-year-old Ali. who runs India Fireworks in a plot adjacent to Das' Balarampur factory. comes from a zamindar family which once owned 100 acres of land. He began making fireworks as a hobby and now runs the area's oldest and largest factory, spread across a two-acre plot.

Making sparklers, 'flower pots' or anars and 'chocolate bombs'-the mind-numbingly loud cracker that is the staple of virtually every Indian

> celebration—the state's factories have a stranglehold over business in the region. And while it is no match for Sivakasi's yearly output of about Rs 150 crore the Bengal-based trade upstages its southern competition in two ways. One: firecrackers made here are considerably cheaper. For example, a case of 100 locally-produced bombs fetch Rs 65 in the wholesale market, while the Sivakasi variety costs between Rs 170 and Rs 180. And flower pots go for Rs 5 to Rs 6 for 10, compared to between Rs 12 and Rs 18 for Sivakasi-made goodies.

And two: as there isn't any discernible difference in quality, several manufacturers pass off locally made stuff with fake Made-in-Sivakasi labels, cashing in on their better marketability. It also fetches Sivakasi prices in the market, which is a major incentive for the counterfeit trade. This element of the business is growing every year. And there is nothing, say government officials, they can do to stop this practice.

There isn't much they can do to control other illegalities in the trade, elrya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri



Workers in Balarampur village

ther. For instance, say government officials, unlicensed factories have mushroomed in the firecracker belts. and number close to double the licensed units. As most of the work is sub-contracted to individual households, it's difficult to keep track of who exactly is manufacturing firecrackers. There is a problem even with licensed factories. Although only six are permitted to stock explosive material

"We don't have skilled workers as in Sivakasi, but our products are just as good."

PRIYA LAL DAS Balarampur factory owner

weighing—gunpowder, in this casemore than 15 kg on their premises. most factories stock more.

HERE is absolutely no provision for fire-fighting measures—this applies equally to households as well as factories. But the more serious hazard involves the health of the workers themselves. People who make firecrackers are usually covered in gunpowder-a mixture of charcoal, sulphur and barium nitrate-which,

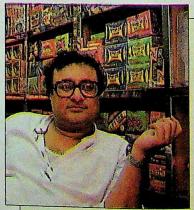
besides being bad for the skin, leads to severe respiratory problems. Last year, N.G. Kundu, deputy chief of explosives (east) with the Central Government travelled incognito through the villages and Calcutta's Canning Street wholesale market to see things for himself. In particular, he found conditions in the factories deplorable. A year later, the situation hasn't changed. Says Kundu: "I am very unhappy with the way things are going on."

It doesn't help when factory owners try to squeeze the maxi-

mum out of their workers for minimum returns, and are well-connected. Sheikh Ali is a perfect example. The zamindar scion is also the local panchayat leader, affiliated to the state's ruling CPI(M). In his factory, Sahar Banu, 50, earns a measly Rs 1.50 a day for making 144 chocolate bombs. Her son, 17-year-old Shafiq, manages to make Rs 12 a day by churning out 1,000 of the bombs, and works freelance after factory hours to earn a few rupees more. The stipulated minimum wage in West Bengal is Rs 22.84 a day. In Balarampur and neighbouring Nandarampur villages, it is also not unusual to see seven-and eight-year-old children stuffing gunpowder into bomb casings, sometimes as many as a thousand a day, to take home as little as Rs 2 at the end of it. Mostly from families who work as contract labour on fields, with no other source of income in the slack months between the sowing and harvesting seasons, they are forced into backbreaking, dangerous labour.

The situation mirrors that in Sivakasi. Only, the owners in the Bengal firecracker belts pay less and earn more profits because of it. Wholesaler-manufacturers are reluctant to talk about their earnings. but there is an indication—they pay labour an average of Rs 12 a day

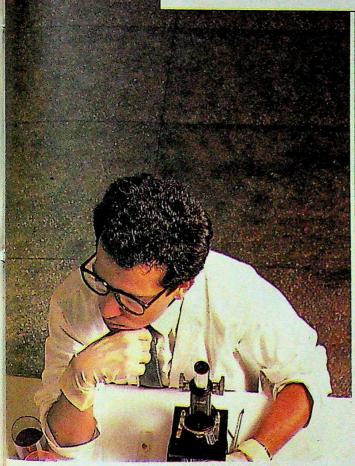
for making 1,000 chocolate bombs. and the raw materials cost another Rs 100. The wholesale price for the same number of crackers: Rs 650. This is the cut of the competitive edge for the state's firecracker industry. "West Bengal has never really posed a challenge to Sivakasi," says Vinod Kumar Narula, a firecracker wholesaler in Calcutta's Canning Street, "but it is difficult to match the prices here." And with Diwali coming up in a fortnight, it is time now to make a killing.



"West Bengal has never posed a challenge, but it is difficult to match the prices here."

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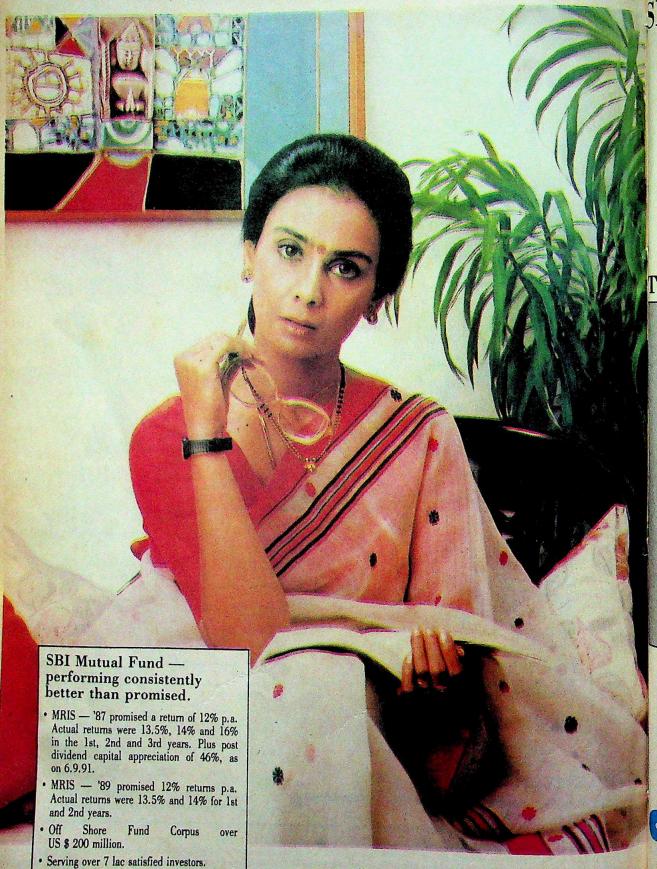
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WELCOMING BMW

FTER years of talk and delay, the Government of India has cleared Germany-based car and motorcycle giant BMW's tie-up with Escorts Limited. While Indian officials are keeping mum about the go-ahead, German trade officials confirm it. The project, estimated to cost Escorts Rs 75 crore, is basically for BMW to sell its motorcycle technology to the Indian company. Currently, the two companies are negotiating the level of BMW's equity participation. Escorts already has a tie-up with Yamaha of Japan for making 125 cc motorcycles, but BMW's range provides more powerful bikes. This is for starters. Later—though officials say it's still too early to talk about it—the tie-up could extend to cars. Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Bonn last month—where he met, among others, a director of the German concern—is said to have helped open the gates.

TAKE HEART

HE Government, under flak for its recent schemes to bring in foreign exchange, can take comfort in recent US measures. Under a programme—part of the Immigration Act of 1990—which came into effect early October, the US is offering 10,000 permanent residence visas every year to those who agree to invest at least \$1 million in business and create at least 10 jobs. Those who come in under this scheme will be eligible for full citizenship, along with their families, after five years. The plan is expected to help the US economy, currently reeling under recession. The Indian Government is also considering a citizenship-for-money scheme, where an NRI may be allowed to hold dual citizenship. There are also various proposals to allow NRIs and foreigners to purchase property and develop townships in India.

BACK IN BLACK

AMTEL Color has washed the red off its balance sheet. Unaudited financial results for 1990-91 reveal a profit of Rs 2.88 crore against a loss of Rs 5.9 crore last year. Turnover is up also up from Rs 103 crore to Rs 141.41 crore. This was despite the USSR—a major customer—not lifting a single picture tube between July and September 1990 and labour problems at the company's plant. Now, the USSR is picking up two lakh tubes and the plant is back operating at full capacity. The company seems to be back in the game.

CARROT AND STICK

INISTERS of State for Commerce P. Chidambaram, and for Textiles, Ashok Gehlot, have joined the inflation-fighting team. According to the duo, in their haste to export cotton yarn, producers neglected the handloom sector. Consequently, shortages developed and prices increased. Chidambaram began it all last month by asking mill owners to reduce prices to pre-budget levels. After this plea got nowhere, the Ministry of Textiles chipped in by halting exports of cotton yarn. The industry got the message, and promptly agreed to reduce prices of yarn supplied to the handloom sector-through the National Handloom Development Commission—to pre-budget levels, a reduction of prices by about Rs 4 to Rs 5 per kg. The North India Textile Manufacturers Association and the South India Mills Association were behind the offer, which is valid till November 30 this year. Now, the ball is back in the Government's court.

CREDIT COMMITMENTS

HE International Financial Corporation's (IFC) latest annual report throws up some interesting comparisons about the Washington D.C.-based lending agency's cumulative commitments. Brazil tops the list with \$1.6 billion—which includes IFC's independent commitments as well as through consortiums—with money going



to 67 companies. Mexico comes in second (see chart), followed by India at \$984.50 million, spread over 55 companies. Pakistan is number nine on the list, with \$409.46 million given to over 30 companies. And Indonesia has almost \$400 million committed, utilised by 25 companies. From the top 10, only Mexico, Turkey and Indonesia represent booming economies, with the rest either deadbeat or in the throes of economic crises and change. If the irclent to countries instead of companies, the agency may have sunk with bad debt by now.

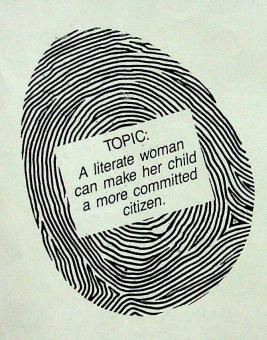
SOFTENING UP

NDIAN software exporters—read body shoppers—may now breathe easy. According to US immigration sources, the US Administration is doing a total rethink on the Simpson Mazzoli Law which governs the entry of foreigners on business to that country. Currently, Indian software professionals have to obtain work permits—difficult to come by—instead of business visas before taking up assignments in the US. A special allowance might also be made for consultants so that they don't have to wait six to eight weeks—the average time taken to get an H1 visa or a work permit cleared—before taking up contracts in the US.

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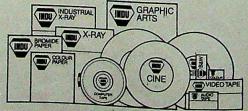
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Widening Horizons

Time for change in country's premier tobacco company

T Virginia House, the Calcutta headquarters of ITC Limited, it isn't unusual to see executives donning Walkman headphones while at work. If it helps them to relax-and work better-goes the top management logic, why not? Shirt-sleeves have replaced the earlier suits and ties. And a hush doesn't descend everytime

top brass walk by-work goes on as usual.

"We're not as stiffnecked as people think we says Chairman Jagdish Narain Sapru, with a laugh. The next instant, Sapru, 57, turns "ITC serious. changing," he says.

It is, in many ways. Sapru retires this November, after a nine-year stint at the top. In that time, the company quadrupled its turnover to Rs 2,316 crore, the figure for 1990-91, and profits from Rs 7.77 crore to Rs 77.52

crore. Sapru, easy-going, accessible, and credited with building up the company's marketing strength. He hands over charge to Krishan Lal Chugh, 53, who was brought onto the ITC board as vice-chairman in 1989.

Chugh is viewed more as a technocrat—he is an engineer by training who is expected to capitalise on ITC's marketing savvy and ride shotgun over the group's plans for the future. This could see another quadrupling of

turnover, to Rs 10,000 crore, by the end of the decade. Chugh is also seen as a stern boss, an anti-thesis to Sapru. Chugh hopes to change that perception.

The ITC focus today is all about change. In chief executives, the way

Outgoing Chairman J.N. Sapru

THE FUTURE

(Holding Company) ITC LIMITED

Tobacco, Edible Oil, Paper

ITC looks at its corporate culture as well as the way it is looking at its own future. Helped in large measure by yet another change: the opening up of most industries to the private sector and the relaxation of licensing norms by the Government.

The plan is to turn ITC into a holding company which will retain the mainstay cigarettes and tobacco business-which accounted for 65 per cent of the company's 1990-91 turnoverand part of its paper interests. Earlier this year, it merged subsidiary Tribeni Tissues Limited (TTL) with the parent. But spin off every other line of business ITC currently has-through divisions

GOUTAM ROY

or subsidiaries-into separate companies, which will approach capital markets and banks indepenently for funds. The plan is also to create new ventures.

ITC Limited will retain a portion of the equity though it isn't clear yet how much in which operations. It will lend its name to them-as it has done last month by prefixing ITC to associate company Bhadrachalam Paperboards Limited.

 The hybrid seeds and edible oil manufacturing

business will come under ITC Agro-Tech Limited. Edible oils is being billed as the second-largest business in the group, after tobacco. According to executives, the market is worth Rs 17,000 crore a year, while the ITC level is just at Rs 200 crore-enough

room for growth. The plan is to start up manufacturing units-currently. ITC uses leased facilities-under the Agro-Tech banner, and have the holding company market the

Chart by PRANAB DUTTA

HOTELS LIMITED Present

Welcomgroup Packaging chain & new hotels

ITC BHADRA-CHALAM LIMITED

materials, paper and finance

ITC AGRO TECH Biotech,

hybrid seeds, edible oil, soaps

ITC SOFTWARE (Planned) Will expand in-house operation for export

ITC FINANCE

(Planned) Leasing, insurance, pension & mutual funds

TMIOL **VENTURE** BANK (Planned)

Retail banking. rural credit, mergers & acquisitions

ITC's marketing savvy, spinning off companies for independent growth and expansion plans are expected to see its turnover quadruple to Rs 10,000 crore by the year 2000.

products. ITC Limited may itself go in for plants, through its agro-business division. Once the group is set in edible oils, it plans to go in for offshoot businesses, like soaps. Says Chugh: "You have flexibility today."

▶ ITC's Welcomgroup chain of hotels will be run by ITC Hotels Limited. ITC would have preferred to hive off this segment as early as 1986, but the Government did not okay the move. Now, the management is looking at spinning it off in a year's time.

► A major push is expected to be in

also negotiating with the governments of West Bengal. Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh for leasing land to plant trees for use as a pulp source. This will serve two purposes: a captive source, and freedom from imported—and expensive—pulp. It is likely that the holding company will retain the major paper business.

► Meanwhile, ITC will consider picking up businesses from the market. Sapru says the company isn't keen on a "grab as grab can" approach. Perhaps this is tempered by the fact that ITC's

some to function efficiently through divisions alone. Also, says ITC's Director Finance Bishu Mitter: "As independent companies, it will be easier to raise funds from the market rather than as divisions of ITC Limited."

To top it all—specially if the banking business pans out—ITC and its group companies will have captive funds. This will help, especially as money is expected to be both more scarce and expensive to come by with every passing year. Asked about this, ITC's Corporate Finance Director Feroze Vevaina smiles in reply. "Wait and see what happens," he goes on to say. "Remember, the Birlas once had banks too."

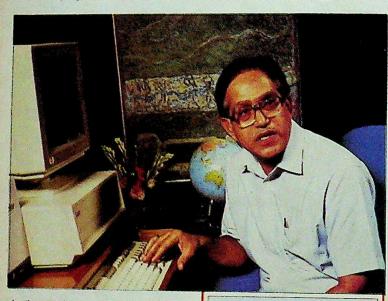
ITC's foreign associate, British American Tobacco Company (BATCO) isn't very keen to be in businesses other than tobacco, edible oils and paper. ITC thinks otherwise, and spinning off the hotels business and expanding the finance trade is one way of doing what it wants to do and at the same time, keeping in line with BATCO's international corporate strategy.

There are other reasons for ITC's diversified push. The assumption is simple: with excise dues on the industry being added on at the average rate of 15 per cent every year-in 1990-91, ITC paid out almost Rs 1,290 crore in excise dues, or over half its turnoverthe company's lower-end cigarettes are going to get priced out of the market. Only premium brands, such as Classic-which already cost Rs 25 for a pack of 20-will find buyers. The cigarette smokers' segment will continually decrease, thanks to a combination of high prices and anti-smoking campaigns. Says Chugh: "Cigarette companies will certainly need more than one portfolio to carry on."

ITC started moving in that direction 15 years ago, when it set up its first Welcomgroup hotel and later established Bhadrachalam Paperboards. Then branched into seeds and edible oils three years ago. Cigarettes will still bring in impressive amounts of revenue—high volume sales lost through low-priced cigarettes will be compensated by low volume sales of high-priced cigarettes. But this will hold true for perhaps 20 years more, and ITC doesn't have any intentions of discovering the truth the hard way. It wants to square its bets straightaway.

Flexibility is the company's current catchword. It has already begun in a small way in Virginia House. ITC is hoping that it spreads out—and pays off.

—SUDEEP CHAKRAVARTI



the financial sector, where ITC plans to go about it in two ways. One: expand existing operations such as the one through Classic Financial Services Limited. And two: set up new companies. A move has already been made by the incorporation of ITC Bhadrachalam Finance. Though company officials refuse to talk about it, there is also a plan to have a memorandum of understanding with the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation to set up a joint-venture bank. Through such a bank, and its own investment companies. ITC wants to be in personal banking, rural credit, mutual and pension funds, insurance, leasing and even mergers and acquisitions. "I believe banking will be privatised." says Chugh, "and we'd like to be there."

▶ Paper is another growth area for the company. Together with its own packaging and printing division, the recently-merged TTL, and ITC Bhadrachalam, the group is already strong in this segment. But it wants to grow more. ITC is thinking of "mega projects" in paper which is likely to include newsprint. The company is "I believe banking will be privatised and we would like to be there."

K.L. CHUGH ITC's Designated Chairman

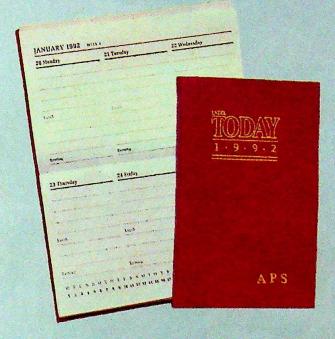
takeover of Punjab Anand Batteries Limited through a Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction-orchestrated revival package hasn't paid dividends. But Chugh is more open to the suggestion. "I won't say we are not interested," he says. "We'll certainly keep our eyes open."

HE holding company will have control over major decisions such as investments and management, but the day-to-day running will be left to professional managers. The reason behind spinning off companies. say executives, is the fact that soon ITC may become too cumber-

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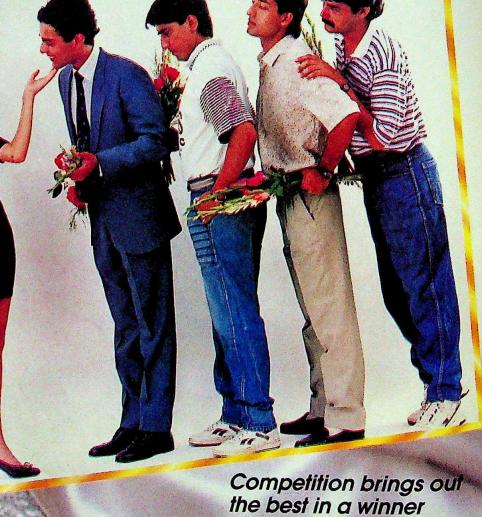
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Persistent Problems

And now, a complication with exports

Twas a test case of Indian attitude to foreign business. And even after the recent industrial liberalisation which permits easier entry to multinational companies, it still is. With Pepsi Foods Limited (PFL), there doesn't seem to be any other way. "There is concern overseas, and not just in the US," says Managing Director Ramesh Vangal. "Some German and Japanese companies have asked us whether it is worthwhile investing in India." He goes on to add: "We have been positive."

That is a generous allowance. considering what has happened to the soft drinks and processed foods venture is nothing to write home about. Project approval delays. Vetting by 14 inter-ministerial committees. Bounced around in as many fullfledged debates and subjected to 200 questions in Parliament. Plus, media attention through about 5,000 articles in the press, mostly questioning the project, ever since PepsiCo of the US announced in 1983 that it wanted to do

business in India. Even that business doesn't look very good.

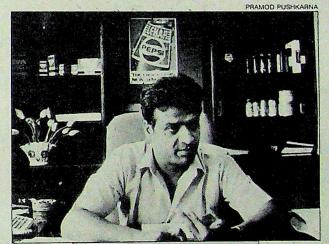
Pepsi is still reeling from a late entry into the soft drink market season, its snack food business getting virtually wiped out last year, and quality control problems with its tomato processing operations in Punjab. The project desperately needs more capital, which may come through-Vangal says there is a plan to increase the equity capital from Rs 25 crore to Rs 80 crore. Currently, PepsiCo owns 39.9 per cent of the equity, Voltas Limited 24 per cent, and the Punjab Agro Industries Corporation 36.1 per cent. The shareholding pattern will not change.

The first year of operations, 1990-91, saw a loss of Rs 24 crore. This year, though turnover is expected to increase from Rs 15.46 crore to around Rs 50 crore, losses will remain about the same. The situation looked so bad at one stage that Pepsi World Tradean arm of PepsiCo-had to bail out the company with an advance export order of Rs 36.5 crore. The way PFL executives see it, the company will reach break-even point by 1993-94.

But controversies still remain. The latest one concerns its export obligation. PFL says it has discharged the responsibility, but the Ministry for Food Processing Industries is not so sure and has sought legal opinion.

When Pepsi was issued a letter of intent in September 1988, the Govern-

Ramesh Vangal: brave front



STATUS REPORT

Losses for 1990-91 are Rs 24 crore. Similar loss expected next year despite rise in turnover.

Equity capital increased from Rs 25 crore to Rs 80 crore.

Snack food business revival planned with a new range of potato wafers.

Soft drink concentrate business recovering from last year's lean sales.

■ Tomato paste exports are expected to pick up.

■ Government is questioning Pepsi's parameters.

ment had imposed some tough conditions. Pepsi was to ensure a foreign exchange inflow five times more than what it spent over a 10-year period. Half its turnover was to be from exports, of which 40 per cent was to be of self-manufactured products and the remaining 10 per cent from a select list. which includes chilly, pepper and cashew-nuts. Also, not more than 25 per cent of the turnover was to come from soft drink concentrates. Pepsi officials say they have never agreed to stiffer parameters anywhere in the world. However, they discount the possibility that the venture over-extended itself in a bid to enter the Indian market.

Of Pepsi's turnover in 1990-91, concentrate sale accounted for Rs 3.45 crore and Rs 9.62 crore came from exports. Both within the conditions.

> "Pepsi has exceeded all its obligations for the yearending March 31, 1991," says Vangal, "And exports were in excess of our commitment to the Gov-

Thecruxofthecontroversy, however, is the composition of exports. Pepsi exported basmati rice milled at its unit in Zahura in Punjab and at a leased line in Delhi. worth Rs 5.46 crore. Another Rs 58 lakh came from the sale of shrimp through a processing facility leased in Bombay.

Also, Rs 59 lakh worth of tea was blended and packaged at a leased Calcutta facility. Pepsi claims these are their manufactured products and flaunts certificates from the Marine Products Export Development Authority, the Agricultural Products Export Development Authority and the Tea Board to prove that Pepsi Foods is a manufacturer-exporter.

But none of the exports came from plants for which the letter of intent was given. Besides, a senior official in the ministry admits that they never realised the company would resort to the stratagem of leasing processing facilities to meet its export commitment. The ministry has now approached the appellate authority at the office of the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports for clarification regarding 'manufactured exports'. A reference has also been made to the Law Ministry to explain whether total turnover should include export proceeds from Pepsi's leased facilities. The







Speech delivered by Dr Bharat Ram, Chairman, Coromandel Fertilisers Limited at the 29th Annual General Meeting held on September 26, 1991 at Secunderabad:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have pleasure in welcoming you to this 29th Annual General Meeting of our Company. As you would have observed, this meeting has been convened for your approval and adoption of the accounts of the Company for the six months period ended March 31, 1991, following the decision by your Directors to change the Financial Year of the Company to end on March 31 instead of September 30 The previous Financial Year's accounts for the year ended September 30, 1990 had been approved by you at the Annual General Meeting held in February this

The shareholders, I am sure, will be extremely pleased at the financial results of the Company for the six months period, keeping up the excellent performance of the previous year which saw the Company back on the dividend list. During the current period, a net profit of Rs. 8.64 crores has been earned. In addition, a profit of Rs. 36.29 crores was realised on the sale of the Cement Undertaking. Directors accordingly recommend a dividend of 23% or Rs. 2.30 per share for the six months period compared to Rs. 2 per share declared for the previous year.

The Fertiliser Plant has continued to perform admirably achieving a high level of production during the six months period. The Company has now embarked on the implementation of certain debottlenecking schemes for its Complex and Phosphoric Acid

Plants aimed at achieving still higher levels of production. Studies for modernisation of the Urea and Ammonia Plants are also being commissioned, while the report of the consultants for the Sulphuric Acid Plant is already received and is being considered.

To cope with the serious problem of power cut, a Diesel Generating set of 4 MW was commissioned at the Fertiliser Plant. The Company has now planned to install another set of similar capacity during the current year to augment captive power generation and insure against production losses to a greater extent.

May I seek your indulgence in giving a picture of the Indian economy as I see it, as our operations are only a part of the total economic scene.

Since the last budget, there has been too much talk about the increase in fertiliser prices. One should know that fertiliser prices have been stagnating for nearly a decade now. During this time, prices of food grains rose by 111% and food grains output by 38%. Undoubtedly, farm incomes have gone up and farmers are in a position to pay higher prices for fertilisers. Of course, raising prices in jumps always creates resistance. Government should have increased fertiliser prices in gradual steps over the past ten years in keeping with the prices all round. At least that can be done in future. In any case, Government had to take this unpleasant step to reduce the enormous deficit in the budget.

For the first time since Independence we are confronted with major national crisis. manifestations are many. We were almost on the brink of default in the management of our international debt. There is a gaping budget deficit Prices are rising at an annual rate of 16 percent in spite of four consecutive good monsoons and bumper harvests. The air is thick with terrorism and violence. Starting with Punjab it has spread to Kashmir, Assam and Andhra Pradesh. We are compelled to trade innocent people for hardcore criminals. We do not count much any more in the international fora. In the UN we are marginalised; in the Uruguay Round we are isolated. And yet we seem to be unconcerned and indifferent as if we have lost our sense of national pride.

After Independence we started off pretty well. Government intervention and participation in economic development was essential. We had to plan to ensure that we got the best results from the limited resources. We had to set up industries which produced goods which were imported from abroad. But no paradigm or policy is good for ever. We had to adapt to the changing world conditions. If we had done it by the middle of 70's, we would have been a very different country today. But change became difficult because it had to be brought about by the very people who benefited from regulation and control. A triangle of vested interests emerged consisting of the politici

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FERTILISERS LIMITED

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politician, the bureaucrat and the businessman. It resisted every change.

However, economic compulsions in the world of today are so strong that even the mightiest of regimes crumbled like a house of cards. Look at what happened in Soviet Union. The coup engineered by the hardliners could not last more than a few hours and the reform which would have been spread over years was put through in a matter of days. Communism became a dirty word after its pre-eminence for more than seven decades.

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Since our last Elections the new Government forged a new era. It has broken out from permit Raj into free competition. No more industrial licensing, no more MRTP clearances; no more import licences. This is going to change the course and quality of development after an initial period of adjustment.

But mere change in policy is not going to get us the full results. What is absolutely essential is cooperation from different sections of society. We have to function like a single entity, a single being, committed to common national causes. What we should have is India Incorporated in which every citizen is a shareholder. Unfortunately, there are hardly any signs that we are on that road. Rather we find that different sections are wanting to pull in different directions rather than forge unity.

Politicians are more bothered about their vote banks. Each one shares his concern for the religion, caste, tribe, class, minorities and so on, merely to build up a vote bank which will bring him to power. It is this sharpening of differences which last year brought the country almost to the brink of a civil war.

Self-interest is not confined to Politicians only. It has become

universal. Business cannot think beyond immediate profit. The labour unions, even doctors and lawyers, agitate on minor issues pushing the whole country into a stalemate. No one looks, even thinks, of the loss to the nation.

What I am wanting to emphasise is that sectional interests have become paramount. As a result, we do not have a coherent society. The different sections are pulling in different directions. Even in the Parliament, too much time is spent on discussions on trivial issues.

In this context I would also like to refer to the gigantic problem of population explosion. I am sure there is no leader - political or religious who is not convinced about the need for population control. But hardly anyone is willing to take effective steps in that direction. Half the benefit of development goes merely to support the population expansion. If our population had been stationary, our per capita income today would have been more than twice as much and, what is more relevant, we would not have even a single individual below poverty line. If all the leaders address themselves to this common problem, a lot can be achieved.

Today, it is our will that is put to test. As I reminisce as an old man I think of those great leaders of all communities, of all religious faiths and political ideologies of the earlier generation who gave us freedom by sacrificing the comforts of their homes for the agonies of the prison; I wonder whether we are really the same people who fought the British. In this freedom struggle, every section of society - lawyers, businessmen, civil servants and even young boys and girls went to jail and even bore lathis and bullets, giving up their jobs and incomes.

Our struggle today is of a different

kind. The immediate task is to strengthen the country economically in order to regain our self-respect. IMF loan is no solution. It will only give us time to pull ourselves up. We have to build a strong export base and reduce imports. That involves almost every sector of the economy. It needs a strong agriculture; it needs a strong infrastructure like power and ports. It needs a strong industry which will produce quality goods. It needs a dedicated workforce which will keep industry running at full speed. It needs harmony and peace, law and order. Indeed it needs cooperation of every section of society.

Let us therefore cooperate in our struggle for economic emancipation. We have everything that we need to make us an industrial power. All that we have to do is work together, pull in the same direction and even give up our comforts for a better tomorrow.

Since we met last, Mr P McCrea and Mr R C Klett, our colleagues on the Board, have left and we thank them for their valuable guidance and contribution during their term of office. Mr H R Brown and Mr J R Dixon of Chevron Chemical Company, U.S.A., have joined the Board and we look forward to benefit by their association.

I would like to conclude by complimenting all the staff and workmen for the contribution they have made to the successful operations of the Company during the last year.

Thank you.

This does not purport to be a record of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting.

answer will determine the size of Pepsi's soft drink business.

Pepsi's explanation is that it could not export from its own facilities because it missed the 1990 tomato season - final approval for processing and export came only in end-May 1990. Only 300 tonnes of tomato paste was processed on a trial basis in the last financial year. Not being up to international specifications, the paste was sold within the country for Rs 65 lakh and a Rs 7-crore export order was carried over to the current financial year. A \$2,50,000 order for soft drink concentrate from PepsiCo International for its operations in Egypt also could not be executed in the last financial year because the company could not match the price. And overseas enquiries for potato chips did not get converted into firm export orders. So, say Pepsi officials, there was enough justification to go in for leased facilities if it was to match export obligations. Only, the ministry is not buying the argument.

Still, the news is not all bad. Vangal says that Pepsi-through its soft drink concentrate sales and the bottlers' network, captured 20 per cent of India's Rs 600 crore retail market, Not bad for a year's work, but the law ministry's decision will determine future growth.

PFL has also contributed to an improvment in farming technology. which should start paying off soon. New techniques and seed varietiescourtesy Pepsi-have raised Punjab's tomato output to 63,000 tons in 1991 from 28,000 tons in 1989. The cost of production came down to Rs 480 a tonne from Rs 650. At an average yield of 15 tons an acre, tomato cultivation has given the farmer three times the returns he obtains from wheat cultivation. The season has increased by 20 days to 40 days.

"We appreciate Pepsl's work." says a senior Food Processing Ministry official. "We expect it to demonstrate a similar effort in potato cultivation and the processing of potatoes, cereal and fruit." He declines to comment on the current flap over exports, but as far as PFL is concerned, appreciation of something is better than nothing. "We need encouragement," says Vangal. "Pepsi could become a positive symbol for foreigners." This, as Vangal knows well, is the best insurance his company has at the moment. And all the trouble may seem worth it three years down the road, when the venture hopes to show its first profit.

-VIVIAN FERNANDES

TISCO

Making Peace

Tatas-Laloo bury the hatchet

ELATIONS between India's largest company and arguably, its most overbearing state, have not been warm since March 1990. That was when Laloo Prasad Yadav took over as chief minister of Bihar and TISCO, based in Jamshedpur, took on the heat. "We can do without the Tatas," was Yadav's opening salvo. And with time, things became bad enough for Tisco Chairman and Managing Director Russi Mody to say: 'There seems to be a language problem between us and Yadav's Government.'

Last month, the mood appeared

would cost the state exchequer Rs 35 crore a year in revenue. Just before it decided to snap the connection, the Government realised that TISCO was drawing power from DVC under an agreement-at the Centre's behestas the BSEB was unable to supply uninterrupted power.

And as a last stroke, the Government decided to take over the management of the steel city from TISCO control. which manages it through its general administration department. Yadav threatened to take away this hold, and hand over Jamshedpur's administration to a public municipal body.

Then came the thaw in the middle of this year, brokered, say state government and company officials, through Kishore Singh, TISCO's resident representative in Patna. State government



Both Yadav and Mody realise compromise is better than confrontation and the process of give and take has begun.



to have changed. Yadav and the company's Joint Managing Director J.J. Irani got together in Patna for the foundation-stone-laying ceremony of a TISCO-sponsored ward at the city's medical college hospital. The message? TISCO is back in favour.

The Rs 2.331-crore Tata group company has reason to feel relieved. Yadav's first crackdown against the Tata group company came soon after he assumed office, when he announced the cancellation of a Rs 5crore cess waiver granted by his predecessor, Jagannath Mishra. Yaday eyen instituted an assembly committee to look into the matter.

Almost immediately after, the state's Labour Department filed a case against Tata Yodogawa Limited, a TISCO subsidiary, on the charges of violating labour practices because the management had not entered into an agreement with the recognised union. Then, the Government found that TISCO was receiving power directly from the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC)-not routing it through the Bi-

officials say West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu, among others, had advised a compromise. Yadav and Mody met in New Delhi in July, talked things over, and decided that compromise was better than confrontation. A result: the Rs 80-lakh Tata Ward in the Patna hospital. Besides, there is an indication that the company will go ahead with its promise to build a second bridge across the Subarnarekha river near Jamshedpur, invest Rs 70 crore in Kumardubi Engineering Works near Dhanbad. which risco runs, and revive a Rs 3,000-crore investment plan in Bihar. At the height of Yadav's TISCO phobia, the company had kept quiet about all these plans, which it had announced during Mishra's chief ministership. Irani capped the reversal of Yadav's stand after the foundationstone-laying ceremony. "We have realised that Yadav is a decent person," he said, "who is keen on the industrial progress of the state." For risco, that is clearly compensation enough for its recent troubles.

-FARZAND AHMED

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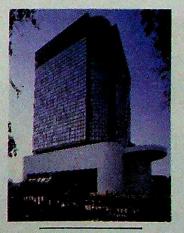
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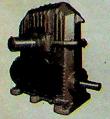
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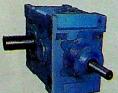
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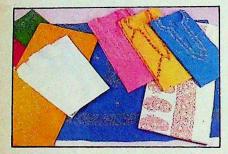
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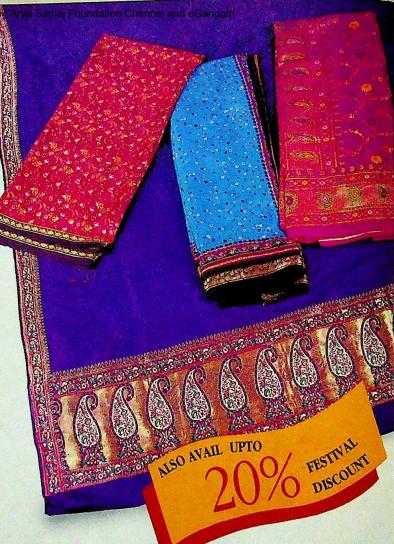
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AVIATION

Soaring Stakes

Boeing and Airbus vie for the Indian market

HE recent fleet expansion programmes announced by both Air India (AI) and Indian Airlines (IA), has flagged off what promises to be another round in the no-holds-barred battle between Boeing Commercial Airplane Com-

pany, the American aircraft giant, and its European rival, Airbus Industrie. The objective is to corner the Indian market which needs around 100 new aircraft by the year 2010.

And the financial stake: a whopping Rs 40,000 crore.

According to civil aviation ministry officials, At is looking for around 60 aircraft to replace its ageing Boeing 747-237Bs-most of which are over 15 years old-and also expandits fleet of 22 aircraft. IA plans to replace its entire vintage fleet of 19 Boeing 737s by 1995 and some of the older 250-seater Airbus A300s. It proposes to invest Rs 5,000 crore by the turn of the century to induct 27 airplanes in the 120-seater class, six in the 150plus seater class and 20 in the 300seat category. For the moment, it is this last category, common to both airlines' needs, that the two aircraft

manufacturers have

their eyes on. Boeing is in the field with its first fly-by-wire twin-engined 777 series, which is still on the drawing-board but is scheduled to fly by 1994-95. And Airbus, with a double offering: the twin-engined A330 and the four-engined A340. The A340 had its maiden flight on October 4, and the A330 is expected to fly in 1992.

As far as IA goes, the battle is between the Boeing 777 and the A330. The 777, with a capacity of 375 passengers and a range of 7.500 km, is Boeing's answer to the A330, which has a

range of 8,800 km and can carry 335 passengers. Boeing executives, in the country to finalise a deal with AI for four 747-400 aircraft, stressed the larger carrying capacity of their aircraft to IA officials.

AIR WARS: ROUND TWO

- Both Air India and Indian Airlines are to acquire about 100 new aircraft by 2010. Nearly 40 of these will be 300-plus seaters.
- Total investment expected to be made for the 100 aircraft by both airlines: Rs 40,000 crore.
- The stiffest competition may be for the new 300-seater plus aircraft, The main contenders: the 305 to 375 seater Boeing 777 twinjet; and the 335-seater twinjet A330 from the Airbus stable.

However, IA, which is still to settle the Rs 2,500 crore forked out for thirty-one A320s. has not begun evaluating any aircraft seriously for future acquisitions. "That will happen only after we receive the remaining 12 A320s, the last of which will arrive by 1993-94," says a senior airline official. But Boeing, which lost out to Airbus five years ago when IA opted for the state-of-the-art, Airbus A320s and cancelled its letter of intent for Boeing 757s, is determined to outmanoeuvre at all costs its European

Running

neck-and-neck

rival this time around.

The Boeing pitch for AI is as strong. The airline, which has to shortlist one aircraft by December this year, invited Boeing to make a presentation on its 777 programme. Here Boeing unveiled a 305-seater version of the 777 with a range of over 12,000 km. This would enable non-stop flights between say, Bombay-Tokyo and Bombay-London, and solve AI's passenger capacity prob-

lem at the same time. "From 1996 onwards we need a long haul, medium capacity aircraft for point to point service," says an AI official. "We can't get a full jumbo load of 406 passengers from any one station, and therefore, cannot really offer direct flights." Currently, At does have 747s which can carry 406 passengers and can fly the distance nonstop. But it routes them through Delhi or Bombay to pick up more passengers. Eliminating a stop will make things cheaper for AI and more convenient for passengers.

For the AI deal, Boeing has to fight off Airbus' A340—a 262-seater with a range of 14,000 km—and the 332 seater trijet MD-11, a competitor from the McDonnel Douglas Corporation of the US, which is already in the market. In addition, there is the option of the shorter range, higher capacity A330, which could be used for servicing the lucrative East African and Gulfroutes which have heavier load of traffic.

And although the 777 is a late comer. Boeing is betting that its horse will win the race. "There are some advantages in coming into the market later than your competitor." says Daniel L. Olason, of Boeing. "We know what they are offering and we have improved on it—and it is too late for them to change their product." Among the

planned innovations: more fuel-efficient and powerful engines and a wider fuselage—allowing a sitting arrangement ranging from six seats to 10 seats abreast with two aisles.

But Airbus isn't exactly sitting back. The never-say-die consortium has already launched a programme to constantly upgrade its planes to match anything the competitors has in mind. And the next few months could see a replay to rival the battle for the skies in the mid-1980s.

-W.P.S. SIDHU

INDO-US TRADE

Patent Pressure

The US asks for more liberalisation

HE lived up to her reputation. Carla Hills, the tough, no-non-sense US Trade Representative was in India on October 6-7 for meetings with government officials and industry representatives. Her message: it is in India's best interests to cooperate with the US stand at the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) forum.

Indía should enforce Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), she said.

This extends to patents-especially pharmaceutical patents-trademarks and publishing copyrights which India rips off. The US complaint is that Indian drug and pesticide manufacturers routinely break up a formula developed abroad, modify the chemical composition slightly, and market it. Saving on either the development or royalty costs.

Other issues (see box) pertain to Indian laws about foreign investment. India has liberalised enough, said Hills. Import tariffs are still too high, and the financial services market, among others, is still closed to foreign insurance and mutual fund companies. "No half-way measures,' added Hills.

Then came the 'or else' bit. If India doesn't ease its stand

by November 26, the US may have to impose restrictions on Indian goods and service exports to the US, with textiles, for example. And perhaps, place India back on its Super 301 list. Besides hindering chances of increased foreign investment from the US. "On the question of foreign investment," said Hills, "protection of patents will assume great importance.'

The problem for India is twofold. One, the US is merging issues under discussion in the international GATT forum—such as IPR—and holding out the threat of retaliation for matters that are strictly bilateral.

This approach could hit India hard. For example, one-fifth of India's Rs 7,052 crore of textiles exports went to the US in 1990-91. The US Govern-

Hills with Chidambaram: no idle talk

SHARAD SAXENA

US **DEMANDS**

- Enforce patent and copyright laws.
- Do it by November.
- Dilute export obligations and local content for investors. Imports-mustmatch-exports condition unproductive.
- Lower import tariffs.
- Open up the services industry to foreigners.

INDIA'S RESPONSE

- Negotiable, but not on product patents.
- After next GATT meet.
- Wait and watch. Done a lot already with raising foreign stake to 51 per cent and automatic clearance in certain industries.
- Subject to GATT talks.
- Limited access. Treat our men similarly.

ment could clamp down by imposing anti-dumping laws on textiles-the Indian variety is usually cheaper than the competition's. The LS may relent later, but the time lost in adjudication and negotiation will prove costly. This is specially important as textile exports, according to Ministry of Commerce estimates, should go up to Rs 25,000 crore by 1994-95. The US

share: about Rs 5,000 crore. Besides, in 1990-91, the trade balance swung in favour of the US for the first time in five years. To swing that balance, India requires easy access to US markets.

On foreign direct investment, there is Rs 41.2 crore worth of approvals that have been granted to US companies since 1990. Both India and the US hope to up that figure by 10 times in the next couple of years. But the deals might not come through. And India would have more to lose. It can happen, if the US Government influences its business to back down, even if temporarily.

India is saying that the recent liberalisation is more exhaustive than ever before and surely, in a system such as India's, one needs a little more time to open up completely. In addition, the

Government is firm about keeping the GATT and the bilateral issues separate. "We will discuss these issues at the Uruguay round," says Minister of State for Commerce P. Chidambaram.

"We will not be pressurised in any way." he adds. The Government's thinking-which, strangely enough, admits that Indian drug manufac-

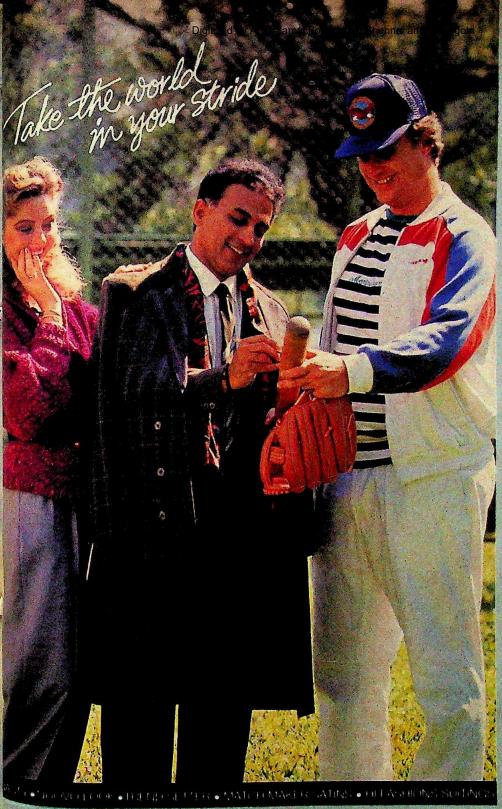
turers guilty of the US charge-is that adopting IPR will lead to skyrocketing drug prices in India, as well as unavailability of the latest drugs except through import. The present system prevents both.

Chidambaram took an even stronger stand on his return from a trip to the US last month, where among others, he met Hills. "On this," he said, "it does not matter if India

is isolated in the international community of nations."

Perhaps. But that still doesn't take care of US demands. And it is a country that takes recourse quite easily to independent action if multilateral fora don't deliver the results it wants. Besides, the one thing that Hills isn't known for is idle talk.

-SUNIL JAIN









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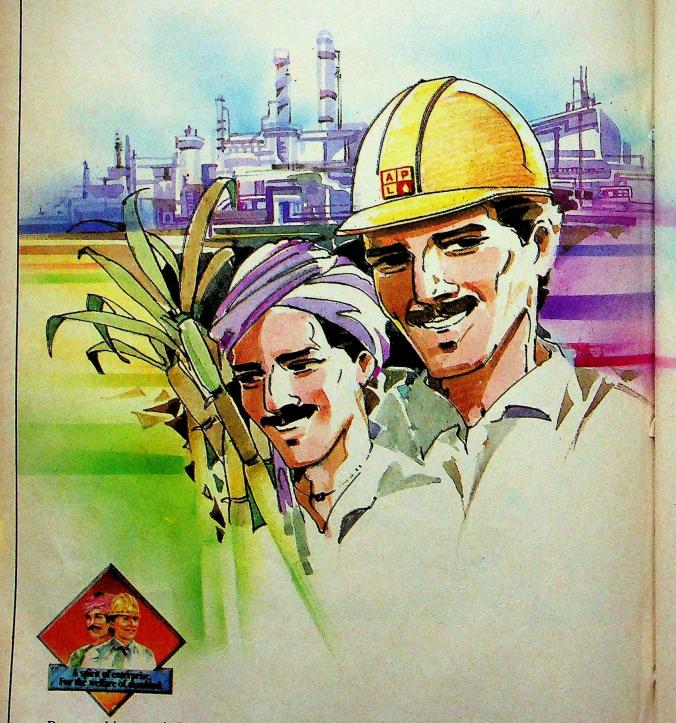
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THORISED DEALERS: CALCUTTA: B. P. TRADERS & JENNACHAMMEDAM SKREWANS & JAMSHEDPUR: PARADISE FABRICS • TEXTILE MIRE • RANCHI: KASHMIR VASTRALAYA • R. C. FIRAYALAL & CO. • VED TEXTILES • VIJAYKUMAR & BROS. (ITV4)

Andhra Sugars - the diversified in Chennal and eGangotri.



Promoted in association with Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation Ltd.

ed industrial giant now promotes The Andhra Petrochemicals Ltd.

An outstanding track record

From a modest beginning in 1947, The Andhra Sugars Ltd. has grown and diversified to become a multi-product, multi-locational conglomerate. Today, besides sugar (5000 TCD crushing capacity), the Company manufactures a wide range of chemicals, fertilisers and oils at its modern facilities at Tanuku, Kovvur and Guntur in Andhra Pradesh.

The Company's financial performance has been impressive. For the year ended 31st March, 1991, the Company recorded a Gross Profit (before depreciation & tax) of Rs.849.85 lakhs. Healthy Reserves, a 1:1 Bonus Issue in 1990 and uninterrupted dividends for three decades reflect this multi-crore Company's strong financials and its commitment to investors.

A hi-tech Petrochemical project

The Andhra Petrochemicals Ltd. has been promoted by The Andhra Sugars Ltd. in association with Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. The Company is implementing a 30,000 TPA Oxo-Alcohols project for manufacture of 2 Ethyl Hexanol (2-EH) and Butanols (n-Butanol & i-Butanol).

The Rs.150 crore hi-tech project incorporates state-of-the-art LP Oxo process technology from Davy McKee (London) Ltd., U.K.

Import substitute products with wide applications

2-EH is a vital raw material for plasticisers which are a critical input in the PVC industry (Cables, Footwear, Sheets, Films, etc.). It also finds application in Adhesives, Emulsion Paints, Surface Coating, Lube & Fuel Additives, Surfactants, Solvent extraction, Agricultural chemicals, etc. Butanols are used in Resins, Dyes, Varnishes, Pharmaceuticals, Lacquers, Pesticides, Rubber Chemicals, Printing Inks, etc.

The products are import substitutive in nature and would thus enjoy a ready and growing market.

Backed by international giants

The Andhra Petrochemicals' project has the confidence of two leading international institutions - Asian Development Bank (ADB), Manila and Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC), U.K. - who are not only participating by way of term loans to the Company but also in its equity.

The wait shall soon be over

Project implementation is in full swing and the plant is expected to go on stream by April, 1992. With strong promoters, state-of-the-art technology and import substitute products, the Company looks forward to a bright future.



THE ANDHRA PETROCHEMICALS LTD.

Regd. Office: Venkatarayapuram, Tanuku-534 215, Andhra Pradesh.

The Chemistry of Success

Singapore. The Digitized by Arya Samaj Foly Idations Chen Giandle Gardottiful City



It's still a city of fine hotels, dining that spans the culinary spectrum and shops with the best the world has to offer.

But now you can visit the world's first oriental mythological theme park, at the recently transformed Haw Par Villa. Or boogie the night - all of it - away at the newly re-opened Bugis Street.

Then again, you could get into the

swing of the jazz age at Alkaff Mansion. Or spend a colourful day shop, gallery and restaurant - hopping between Tanjong Pagar shophouses - now painted every shade of the rainbow.

A cablecar ride away on Sentosa, Singapore's recreation island, are golden beaches, a walk-in Butterfly Park and at the new Underwater World, a chance

CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection,

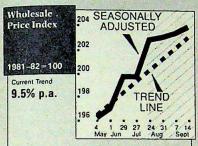
to come face-to-jaws with a shark. Also beneath the waves but without getting wet, the new Sealion Enclosure at Singapore's world famous open Zoo is lots of fun, as is the Penguin Parade at the BirdPark.

All these and many more make Singapore today's most colourful holiday choice for the whole family.

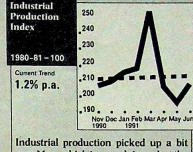
TH.

The signs are discouraging. Current data indicates marginal growth in industrial production. In fact, both industrial and manufacturing outputs are down 2 per cent from 1990 levels. If it doesn't pick up, and agriculture continues to grow at 2 per cent a year, then the targeted growth of 4.5 per cent for the economy will be difficult to achieve.

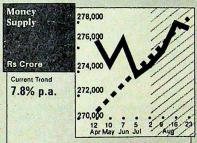
All data are seasonally adjusted. Current trends are computed on the basis of six months' (weekly data) or one-and-a-half years' (monthly data) figures.



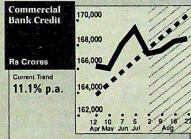
There appear to be no controls on inflation-the rate is now up to 16.1 per cent, over last year.



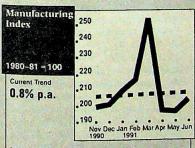
over May, which is a good sign-but the overall rate of growth remains dismal.



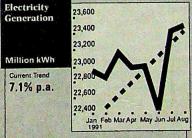
Money supply was more or less stable if the trend rate of growth continues to remain low, there may be hope yet.



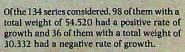
Credit grew marginally, but it's still below July levels-industry needs faster growth to respond.

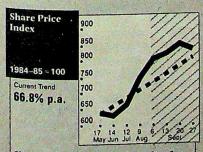


Manufacturing output also grewhowever, the near-zero rate of growth hardly indicates a recovery.



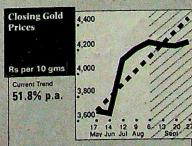
Though it has increased since the beginning of the year, low generation remains a hurdle for industrial growth.





as

Share prices registered a slight dip after a period of sustained rise-however, speculative activity is still very high.



Cooling the earlier upsurge, gold prices were stable over the fortnight-smuggling is not as lucrative as before.

SELECTED INDICATORS	
Letter of Intents Numbers, August	1990
Industrial Licences	
Numbers, August	242
Thousand Tonnes, August2609	2659
Petroleum Refinery Products Thousand Tonnes, August	3956
Foreign Exchange Reserves	
Rs Crore, August	1093.31

Compiled by THE POLICY GROUP

WHOLESALE PRICES

Growth of items in the 1st fortnight of September 1991

% Growt
Chillies
Oranges
Bananas 9.9
Synthetic Fibres 9.8
Silk Raw7.8
Ragi7.1
Paper7.0
Groundnut Seeds
Barley 5.2
Turmeric
Maize
Gingelly Oil
Cables & Wires
Moong4.8
Bolts & Nuts4.77
Copra
Coir Fibre
Rice
Maida3.18
Dry Cells 3.03
Jowar2.71
Gingelly Seed2.67
Cotton Yarn
Transformers
Pig Iron 2.41
Coffee 2,39
Copper & Alloys 2.14
Khandsari
Tubes1.78
Rubber
Logs, Timber, Bamboo
Pete Crude & Natural Gas 1.44
Eggs
Wheat 1.41
Trucks 1,39
Atta 1-39
Solvent Extracted Oil
Solvent Extracted Oil
Cotton Seeds
Rails
Meat1.34
Coal
Mustard Oil
Cashew-Nut
Mining Machinery1.17
Plates & Sheets
Bars & Rods1.02
Milk1.00
The state of the s

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECTS

Excerpts from the speech by the Chairman, Mr K.L. Chugh, at the 45th Annual General Meeting on 26th September, 1991, at Calcutta.



Mr K.L. Chugh

We are meeting in the thrall of a world in turmoil. Events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe underscore that men are the vessels of ideas, and that nothing can stop or save ideas when their time has come. At home, the tragic assassination of our former Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has taken from our midst a leader in the flower of his youth and full of promise. Whilst we bear the anguish of his loss, let us rededicate ourselves to fulfilling the potential of India for which he sacrificed his life.

Recent policy initiatives of the Government are beckoning us to make the industry globally competitive and a pillar of strength for our economy. We will dwell on this issue after we have first assessed your Company's performance.

■ COMPANY PERFORMANCE

Last year's results continue the recent saga of unsurpassed performance, and your Company has scaled new peaks on virtually every measure over the previous year. Sales volume at 19,392 tons increased by 15% and turnover at Rs. 83.38 crores by 28%. The increase in volume and turnover were achieved in conjunction with an enrichment

of the product mix, and the net value per ton of paper increased by 9%. As an index of improving efficiency, capacity utilisation over the previous year escalated by sixteen percentage points to 142%. These achievements and all-round improvement in operating efficiencies are reflected in the profits before tax increasing by 51% to Rs. 8.63 crores, and the profits after tax by 42% to Rs. 6.81 crores. The profits after tax would have been higher but for the reducing effect of the mid-year increase in the rate of surcharge on corporate tax by 7%, and the increase in corporate tax, as a result of the reduction in depreciation allowance by 25%. The foreign exchange earnings increased by 411% to Rs. 6.16 crores, getting recognition for your Company as an Export House. The performance of your Company has reinforced the confidence of the investing public. The share price has escalated to Rs. 270/- from Rs. 24/- per share three years ago, bracketing your Company with the league of high performers in the country. The performance of your Company during the first six months of the current year continues the momentum of the previous few years.

Statistics of performance are not, however, mere cold numbers. They reflect the vision of leadership, unstinting efforts of the employees, and the patronage of our valued customers. It is, therefore, fitting to place on record our applause and appreciation of them. In the perspective of performance, your Board decided to pay a highest-ever dividend of 45% and recommended an issuance of bonus shares in the ratio of 3 shares for every 5 held.

■ TTL - THE RETROSPECT

THE LEGACY: Last year's results would have seemed unbelievable just a few years ago. 1990/91 is only the third year since your new management team accepted the responsibilities for the stewardship of your Company. In retrospect, therefore, it would be enlightening to assess and learn from the experience of these three years. In 1987, the year before your new team took over the reins, production at 13,009 tons as well as capacity utilisation had declined by 10%, over the previous year. Reduced sales at Rs. 37.9 crores had declined by 4%. Profits before tax at Rs. 1.2 crores registered a decrease of 79%, and the lowest decadal earnings per share of Rs. 1.29 were reflected in the lowest decadal dividend of 12%.

THE CAUSES: For nigh on to forty years, since the early 50s, TTL had been operating in virtually monopolistic circumstances. The debilitating effects of monopolistic operations which weakened the sinews of organisation activities needed corrections. Exclusive dependence on one industry and related products needed a hedge through creating other value-added products and commensurate market development. To withstand the competition, product quality needed improvement and injection of cost effectiveness had become an imperative. Urgent attention was required towards overdue investments in technology upgradation, modernisation, market development. and energy management to prevent loss of morale and maintain the 'spirit of performance'.

Emerging competition identified opportunities in TTL's circumstances. They not only prevented the growth of TTL in an expanding industry, but started invading its existing share of the market. The risk-return profile of TTL had become increasingly unattractive. It was in this perspective that ITC injected the leadership to resurrect the organisation.

THE REMEDIES: The pivot of the new strategies devolved around giving direction, and creating leadership to unleash the abilities and potential of the organisation. With the determination to succeed with the same people, clear business directions, with longterm vision were devised, and implemented, through effective participation of people at all levels. The emphasis was on product quality improvement and product development for identified customer segments. Commodity selling was replaced by product marketing through product differentiation and market segmentation. Successful innovation and R&D facilitated redesigning of marketable products using unconventional raw material substitutes like jute. significant measure to create competitive advantage was to actualise the concept of Total Energy Management. The installation of a microprocessor controlled modern fluidised bed boiler and thereafter a turbine for cogeneration of power has made your Organisation self-reliant in power supply in a cost effective manner. Higher thermal efficiencies are being obtained inspite of using lower grades of coal. In 1990/91, the consumption of power per unit of output further decreased by 7% from 2633 kwh to 2455 kwh. TTL's use of coal per ton of paper produced has reduced by 12% from 1.81 tons to 1.59 tons. Product quality and process efficiency improvements enabled the shrinkage and wastages to be reduced from 16.5% to 11.5%. In an environment imbued with the 'spirit of productivity', employee costs have declined from a dismal 17.5% three years ago to 10.9% at present, with significant improvement in employees' earnings. The watchword is Productivity and Producing Quality Products at a Competitive Cost. It is significant that your Organisation's turnaround was effected by the existing team of people who were motivated, skilled, and led towards the path of success by the infusion of leadership.

THE RESULTS: The results of the remedies are dramatically perceived in the performance statistics for the year 1990/91. These indices reveal substantial improvements over the three-year period in which your new team has guided the destiny of your Company. Your Organisation's turnaround augurs well for the future, as we continue to strategise for profit, growth, and survival in an increasingly complex and dynamic environment.

■ THE PROSPECTS

The future prospects for your Company in the next 3/5 years' span are promising and are linked to two factors:

- a) The new Industrial Policy, and
- The merger with ITC and strategies for profits, growth and survival by creating competitive advantages.
- THE NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY:
 The new Industrial Policy marks a
 watershed in the country's economic
 development. It is to the prospects of
 economic emancipation what Independence Day symbolises for the
 political freedom of the country.

It will become incumbent on businesses in India to achieve international levels of competitiveness in productivity and quality. Alliances, mergers and divestments, for the first time, will create for Indian business the invigorating chill of international competition. However, we must ensure that the new Industrial Policy is implemented expeditiously to prevent a loss of national credibility in the eyes of the world community. In the context of the new Industrial Policy, the need to create

international competitive ability, and the merger with ITC, certain strategic realities come into focus with reference to the future.

STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE AND THE MERGER WITH ITC: In the emerging scenario, we can anticipate very substantial growth for speciality papers. This growth will whet the appetite of competition. The probable reduction in customs duty, will increase competition substantially threatening the viability of the industry protected thus far, unless it strategises today to enhance its competitive prowess.

In this perspective, I believe, that stand-alone small and medium-sized companies in the Paper Industry, will find themselves strained to keep pace with growth. Given the capital intensity and technology imperatives of the Industry, there is a vital link between size and strategy. Your Company needs to make increasing investments immediately. The pulp making capacity will be enhanced by 67% from 9,000 tons to 15,000 tons through modernisation. It is proposed to expand this capacity further to 25,000 tons per annum. But the growth of your Company, and indeed the entire industry, has to be in compliance with concepts of 'sustainable development'. We cannot be increasingly dependent on forest-based raw materials at the cost of the environment. To develop alternative sources of raw material supply, substantial and sustained investments in R&D will continue. All these investments will require the mobilisation of substantial resources. The modernisation of paper machines and auxilliaries alone will result in an investment of over Rs. 60 crores. The merger with ITC will facilitate not only access to finance and managerial leadership, it will also increase the market reach, both domestic and international, of your Company. With increased market leverage, your Organisation will improve its presence in the domestic market and will better its export performance of Rs. 6.16 crores last year and continue to justify its recognition as an 'Export House'.

We have progressed significantly on the issue of the merger with the appropriate authorities. By its order dated 6th September 1991, the Department of Company Affairs, Government of India, has approved the amalgamation of your Company with ITC Ltd. This has been followed on the 11th of September 1991 with the High Court in Calcutta sanctioning the scheme of merger. We expect the process to be completed by the end of this year. The ITC-TTL synergies will add considerable muscle to your Organisation.

■ CONCLUSION

In conclusion, last year's performance has witnessed the continued climb of your Organisation on the success gradient. The retrospect reveals a spectacular turnaround which must give us cause for some satisfaction. We have strategised to merge with ITC to avail of the prospects of future opportunities and in the context of increasing competitive challenges. Before we merge with ITC and begin a new chapter in your Organisation's life, it is only right that we record our tribute to the perseverance and untiring efforts of many, particularly those who have toiled very hard in the past three years and who have laid the foundation of your Company and have nurtured it to its present eminent position. We commend our shareholders who have stood by us and our many employees, suppliers and other publics, both internal and external, whose loyalty and support have been a bedrock of strength for Tribeni as an enterprise.

I believe that your decision to merge Tribeni Tissues with ITC, will enable Tribeni to fulfill the aspirations of all its stakeholders even better. Tribeni in turn, will add lustre to ITC which is a shining example of a successful Indian enterprise and a valued corporate citizen.

This does not purport to be a report of the proceedings of the 45th Annual General Meeting.

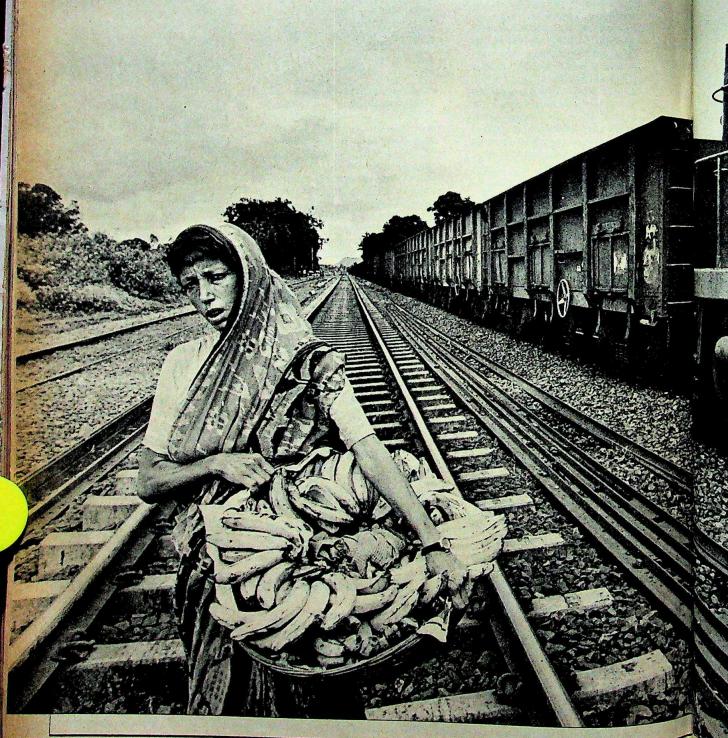


The vision to lead, the will to succed.

Contract TT, 121.91

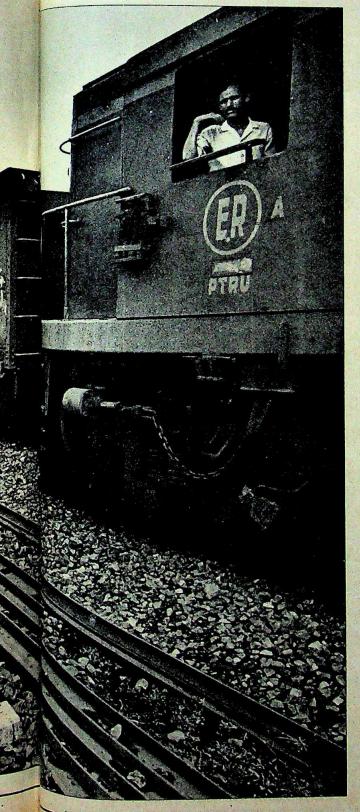
Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

Ostracised by her own community, 'Kitty Memsahib' now sells fruit for a living, an eloquent and emaciated symbol of all that went wrong with McCluskieganj.



an

Kitty at the railway siding facing a bleak future; and (below) Ivan Victor: the last of a vanishing breed



MCCLUSKIEGANI

THE DYING OF A DREAM

The Anglo-Indian community in India were generally typecast as a carefree, fun-loving people. But the fact of their mixed parentage instilled a crisis of identity. To overcome that, the community launched a historic project—the establishment of their own homeland in the hills of Chota Nagpur called McCluskieganj. It was a grand vision but intrinsically flawed. Today, that dream lies in ruins.

By DILIP BOBB and FARZAND AHMED



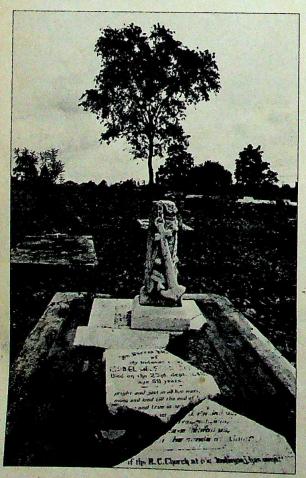
Morris in front of her lonely bungalow; and, (bottom) the graveyard where many a dream lies buried

HIS is the place where a dream died. Where many dreams died. You can see them still, laid out in orderly rows in the graveyard, silent cenotaphs to a grand illusion, as flawed and fanciful as the history of the people who lie under the cold headstones. The graveyard is hardly needed now. There are only a few dreams left to be buried, only the epitaph left to be written. This may well be it.

More than half a century after the first settlers arrived here to establish a 'homeland' of their own, this still remains a waystation catering mainly to the coal trains that shuttle their weary way to and from the nearby coalfields. It is still possible to board a train in Calcutta and alight at the dilapidated station. But it is a journey without a destination, a painful passage into the past. The future died a long time ago.

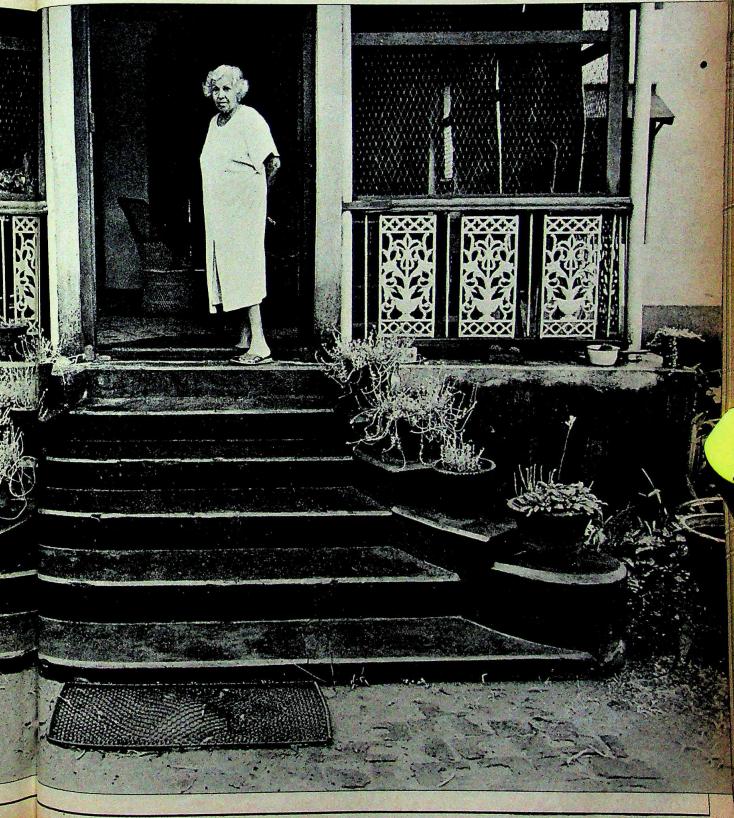
As the train grumbles to a halt, out from the clouds of steam emerges a wild and wanton-looking woman with fair skin and blue eyes. Barefoot and draped in a ragged sari, she sells fruit to passengers for survival. Her name is Kitty Texeira and she is a living-if emaciated-symbol of the ill-fated dream called McCluskieganj.

The name is the clue, a hybrid of the East and the West, like the community whose idea it was to make this place their homeland. For two centuries, the Anglo-Indians have woven





The dwindling band of survivors in McCluskieganj are trapped in prisons of the past, like Mary Morris who loves the place but only has memories for company.



Judy divides time between tending graves and her ailing mother (left) who says she can't cope with 'Indians'.

colourful strands into the tapestry of Indian society. But history-and the tarbrush of miscegenation-consigned them to a racial limbo. Their refuge was McCluskieganj.

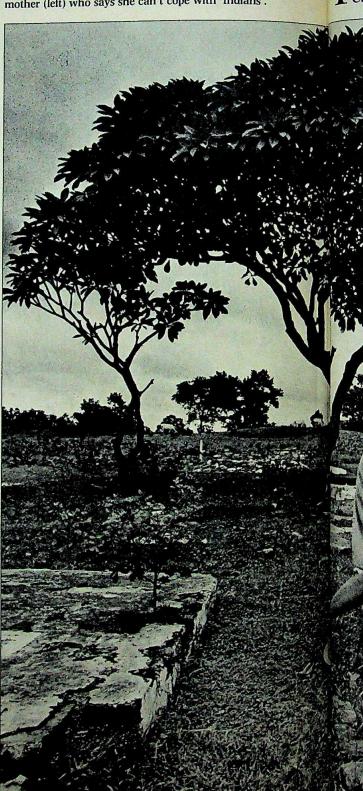
IKE the Jews, the Anglo-Indians had no collective lodestar. no separate identity, no homeland they could call their own. Neither Indian nor British-and reviled by boththeir diaspora was dictated by their British masters and mainly concentrated in India's vast network of railway colonies. That crisis of identity led to the birth of McCluskieganj, a homeland for the Anglo-Indians. Named after its founder, Timothy McCluskie, an adventurer of Irish-Indian parentage, by 1936 almost 400 Anglo-Indian families had sunk their savings into McCluskieganj.

The location seemed ideal, at an altitude of 1,500 ft in the hills of Chota Nagpur. The 20,000 acres leased by McCluskie for his people was on fertile land where almost anything could be grown. Today, barely 15 Anglo-Indian families are left in McCluskieganj. The only reason they are still here is because they have nowhere else to go. At 35, Kitty Texeira is the youngest and the most pathetic symbol of everything that was wrong with McCluskieganj. "Like McCluskieganj I don't have a future," says the woman the locals call Kitty Memsaheb.

Born to an army officer, Kitty's parents moved to McCluskieganj and left her 11 acres of land, chaining her to a homeland that had long since decayed. Shunned by her own community for being wayward, Kitty lives with a tribal.

But the real tragedy of McCluskieganj lay elsewhere. Lacking the motivation, drive and pioneering spirit necessary to carve out a homeland, many Anglo-Indians (estimated population: 50,000) stayed away and the original settlers started trickling back to city life and city jobs. The younger members migrated to Australia, England and Canada. Within a tragically short period of time, McCluskieganj became a place where people retired. Says Cyrill D'Costa, an NRI on a visit to his ancestral home: "McCluskieganj was a colourful chapter in the history of Anglo-Indians. But it's gone now."





The real tragedy of McCluskieganj is symbolised by Judy Gomes with her husband in Calcutta while she is trapped in this decaying place because of her ailing mother.





Can Fin Homes Ltd (Sponsor: Canara Bank) Regd. Office: No.32, Il Floor, Race Course Road, Bangalore 560 001.

HELP US TO HELP THE HOMELESS YOUR SAVINGS - OUR STRENGTH

Can Fin Homes offers you a higher rate of interest on deposits.

CAN FIN HOMES ACCEPTS DEPOSITS UNDER: ■ TRUST DEPOSITS ■ FIXED DEPOSITS

■ CUMULATIVE DEPOSITS ■ RECURRING DEPOSITS ■ HOME LOAN ACCOUNT SCHEME OF NHB.

HIGHLIGHT

- Interest @ 15% per annum.
- Interest is tax free upto Rs. 10,000/under section 80L of Income Tax Act. 1961.
- Deposits exempt under Section 5(1) and 5(1A) of Wealth Tax Act, 1957.
- Loan facility from any of our 23 branches or 2,000 branches of Canara Bank, on our deposits.
- Above all efficient and prompt service.
- Priority for Housing Loan.

Company accepts Deposits from public. The various Deposit Schemes are as under, namely:

I. FIXED DEPOSIT :

Deposits in multiples of Rs. 1,000 subject to a minimum of Rs. 2,000/-.

PERIOD OF DEPOSIT **RATE OF INTEREST** (in months) (per annum) % 25 to 35 14.0 36 to 47 14.5 48 to 84 15.0

II. CUMULATIVE DEPOSIT:

Minimum Deposit Rs. 2,000/-.

PERIOD OF DEPOSIT MATURITY VALUE OF (in months) DEPOSIT OF Rs. 1,000

25	1,326.089	
36	1,521.892	
48	1,783.478	
60	2,061.032	
72	2,381.780	
84	2,752.444	

III. RECURRING DEPOSIT:

Minimum monthly Deposit Rs. 100 and multiples of Rs. 100.

PERIOD OF DEPOSIT RATE OF INTEREST (in months) (per annum) % 25 14.0 36 14.5 15.0

Interest will be paid on maturity compounded at half yearly rests.

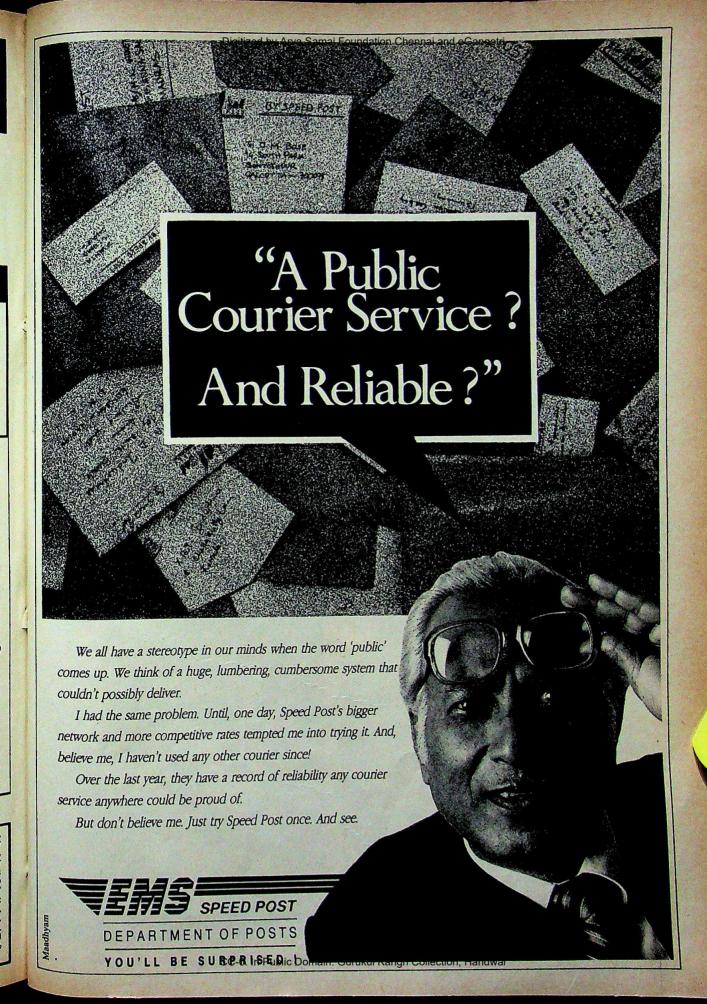
For deposits accepted directly from charitable institutions, additional interest @ 0.5% per annum subject to a maximum of 15% per annum will be paid.

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This abridged advertisement appears further to the statutory advertisement published on September 20, 1991. All the particulars as required under Rule 3 of Non-Instantaged advertisement appears turner to the statutory development of the properties of topportune 20, 1971. All the particulars as required under Rules Banking Financial Companies and Miscellaneous Non-Banking Companies (Advertisement) Rules, 1977, are contained in the deposit application form



Potter reminisces about the good old days while (below) a giant excavator hovers ominously on the skyline.

The finality of that statement is borne out by the decrepit state of the bungalows, the unkept gardens and the deserted homes. Those who remain now are prisoners of the past. Like Mary Morris, an ageing spinster who lives alone with no one to look after her. She complains about the 'locals' being unreliable: "I have to do everything myself." But she has no plans to move. "Where am I to go?" she says resignedly.

short way along the single dusty road, H.E. Christensen, a retired assistant commissioner of excise, has the answer. . The Christensen family are busy packing and moving to Goa. Says Mrs Christensen firmly: "There is nothing left here."

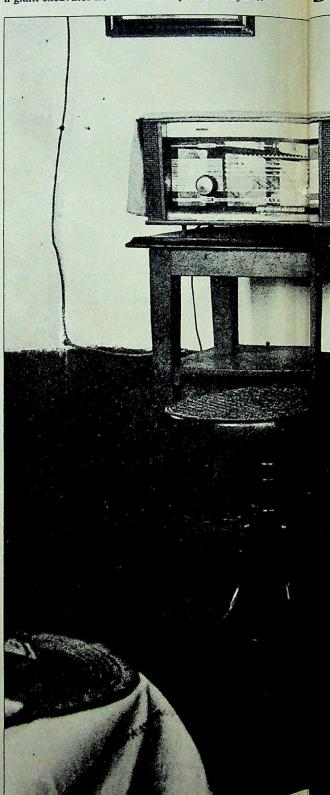
The reasons are obvious. Most of the original settlers did not know much about farming and lacked entrepreneurial skills. With no additional source of income, they gradually sold off their properties and left for greener pastures, leaving behind a trail of broken dreams. Keith Baker, 65, now earns his living selling bread at the railway station. His father was a colliery manager who spent the money he had earned, and Keith squandered whatever was left of his legacy.

While the older ones brave it out, the real pathos lies in the children who are chained to McCluskieganj by family obligations. Like Judy Gomes, 35, daughter of well-known McCluskieganj stalwart Dorothy Thipthorpe, 73. Judy faces the classic McCluskieganj dilemma-her husband works in Calcutta while she is forced to look after her ailing mother.

The original McCluskiegani has already died a natural, if tragic, death. Now, construction of new railway sidings is destroying whatever is left of the original dream—its natural beauty. But for the Anglo-Indian community, McCluskiegani represents something more tragic and final, a unique opportunity to build their own homeland that was eventually destroyed by their history and their genes.

As the sun sets over McCluskiegani, the Christensen children switch on their tape recorder. Across the hills drifts the opening bars of another forgotten landmark: the late Jim Morrison singing his classic, The End.





Stanley Potter devoted his remaining days to collecting and reading old records of McCluskieganj. But an eye ailment left him with just a radio to break the monotony.

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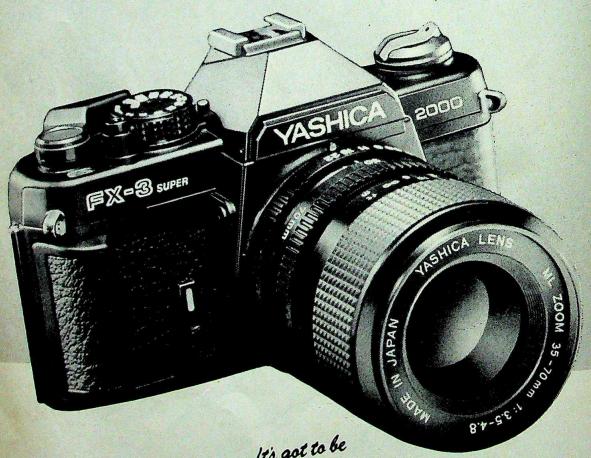


FX-3 SUPER 2000

The top-seller, worldwide.

They call it the No.1. Because it's so versatile.
The camera for the hobby photographer.
Also the camera for the budding professional.
The 1/2000th second shutter speed
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Radical Recipe

Blood therapy sparks off a controversy

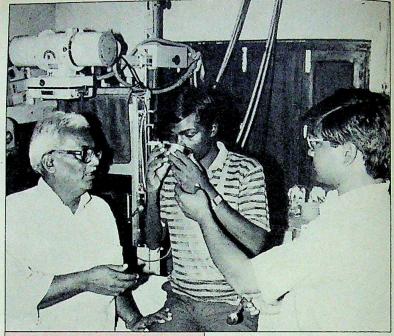
QUEEZE a lemon and collect the juice in a copper bowl. Mix 100 gm of pure honey in it. Add 50 cc to 100 cc of fresh blood drop by drop and stir with a copper spoon. Finally, pour in water and drink the potion.

No, this is not the recipe for Dracula's continental breakfast. It is a unique, though bizarre, therapy given by Dr R.C. Gupta, an Allahabad doctor, to patients suffering from incurable diseases like rheumatoid arthritis. It doesn't have scientific sanction but patients are lapping it up. As many as 26 patients have already completed a five-week course-drinking blood twice a week-and another 15 are undergoing the therapy.

Amazingly, Gupta is no quack. In fact, his credentials are sound-a masters in orthopaedic surgery, the 61year-old doctor is the former head of the Orthopaedics Department at the Allahabad Medical College. To add to that, he has won 14 national and international awards including the Dr B.C. Roy National Award in 1989.

The iconoclastic doctor shot into prominence in August last year when he offered a blood-soaked sandwich to one of his interns, Dr Rautela. While a nauseous Rautela was hospitalised for nearly a fortnight, horrified medical college students went on strike. Gupta paid a heavy price for it: he was suspended just eight days before retirement. In fact, the state Government is still to release his pension and provident fund for which a legal battle is on.

But an unrepentant Gupta is carrying on. In July this year he sought the Indian Council of Medical Science's help for researching his project on blood therapy. They are yet to respond. Gupta's patients, however, continue to subscribe to his therapy. For instance, Kakul Zuberi, a 17-year-old student from Pratapgarh, claims to have been cured of arthritis after going through a five-week course with Gupta. Ironically, Kakul's father is a doctor himself. Boasts Gupta: "Her father is so im-



Though some patients claim miraculous cures, the therapy is rejected by the scientific community.

pressed that he has referred other patients to me for therapy.'

Equally impressed is 26-year-old Chhotey Prasad. A chronic patient who was on corticosteroids for years, he claims he's improved after four sittings. Says Prasad: "I've been suffering for 10 years. This is the first time that I am reacting to treatment so fast."

Pushpa Negi, the 28-year-old wife of an air force officer, goes even further. She says eight sittings with Gupta have seen her off drugs altogether. Claims she: "Prior to the treatment I needed someone to help me get up from bed each morning. But now I can do most of the work myself."

The blood therapy has also given a fresh lease of life to Shashi Verma, 39, from Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh. In fact, she even broke a life-time habit of vegetarianism for it. She claims that after three sittings with Gupta, her drug intake has gone down from six to eight analgesic tablets a day to a couple. This, after treatment at reputed institutes like AHMS failed to help.

But the idea of drinking blood

Dr Gupta (left) treating a patient

doesn't always grab everyone. For instance, a chronic arthritis patient from Kanpur is firm: "I would like to die on this bed with stiff joints instead of doing such a demonic thing." Even Gupta confesses it isn't easy to convince patients. He claims that 80 per cent of his cases show "positive results".

That's only Gupta's side of it. His unusual therapy is far from getting the stamp of approval from the scientific community. According to him the intake of one's own blood forms certain juices which fight the "terrorist" cells causing the disease. Other doctors are dismissive. Says Dr V.R. Joshi, 55. a senior rheumatologist at Bombay's Hinduja Hospital: "I have never heard anything like this before. Drinking blood has no medical sanction anywhere in the world. The only parallel I can remember is drinking urine.'

Perhaps more vehement is Dr V.D. Verma, 46, an associate professor at Lucknow's King George's Medical College: "Giving blood orally to an arthritis patient sounds pretty ridiculous. It may be a hoax for all you know."

Hoax or not, Gupta certainly isn't in it for the money. His consultation fee for three weeks is just Rs 50. And the daily charges for a room in his nursing home range from Rs 40 to Rs 60. The problem is that nobody is questioning his financial motives. It's the medical ones that are open to query.

—DILIP AWASTHI in Allahabad

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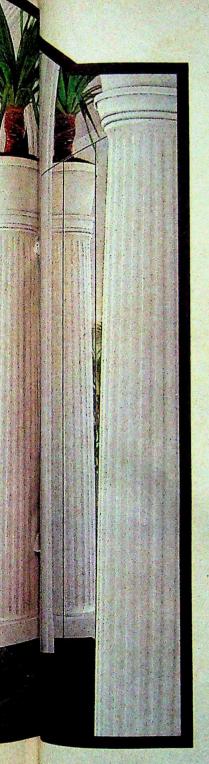
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SMALL SCREEN STARS

Coming Into Their Prime

TV artistes outshine their more glamorous cinema counterparts in depth, range and popularity of roles.

By W.P.S. SIDHU in Bombay

REMEMBER the time when people switched on their television to watch the capers of carrot-crunching detective Karamchand played by whatshisname with a mole on his nose? And the main attraction of

Photographs by SHARAD SAXENA

Khandaan were the intrigues of Ketki, played by whosthatgirl with a sexy pout? Or the loud-mouthed but lovable Guru, protagonist of Nukkad—whose real name no one bothered to find out?

But not any longer. Now, at 9 p.m., people tune in to see Pankaj Kapoor, not Karamchand, playing Phatichar. While the saucy Ketki after numerous avatars is today recognised as Neena Gupta. And Guru, nowidentified as the hazel-eyed Dilip Dhawan, has emerged as the small screen's undisputed guru.

The host of artistes who have broken out of the strait-jacket of their stellar roles have overcome the "zip, zap, zoom stardom" of prime time television, where popularity lasts only as long as the serial, and proved beyond doubt that they are not one-serial wonders.

Most already have over half-adozen popular shows to their credit. And today they are sought after

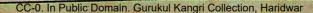
by producers and directors—like

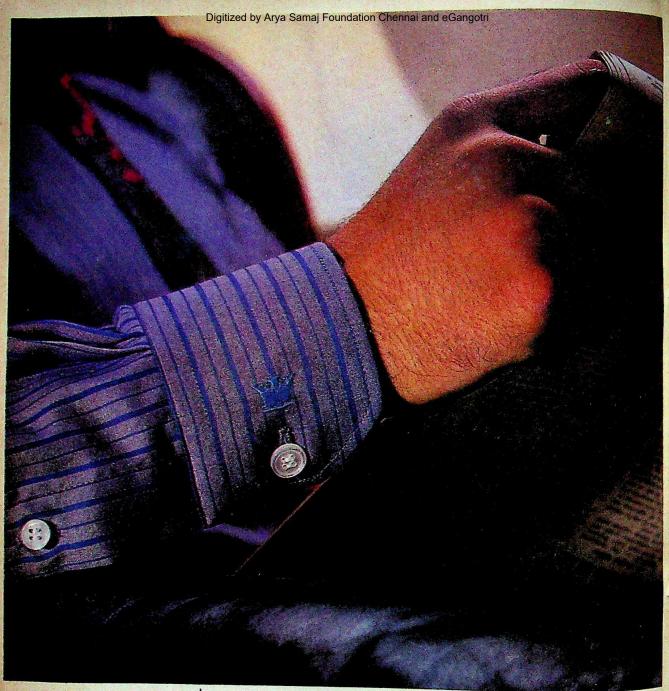
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(Clockwise from top) Pankaj Kapoor; Dilip Dhawan; Neena Gupta: gaining recognition





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Shah Rukh: teeny-bopper heart-throb

silver screen counterparts. They have become selective about their roles and many are now demanding their price-in some cases as high as Rs 20,000 per episode.

HE plum roles and substantial fees are, obviously, a recognition of the ability of these stars to attract audiences. According to one estimate, prime time stars attract an additional 15 per cent viewers (see box). And although they have also acted in films, they are now being seen as exclusive products of the tube. These star wonders include Dilip Dhawan. Pankaj Kapoor, Neena Gupta, Alok Nath, Aneeta Kanwar, Pallavi Joshi, Shah Rukh Khan, Ajit Vachani, Rama Vij and Kavita Chowdhary. Significantly, most are graduates of the prestigious National School of Drama (NSD) or come from a theatre background.

Interestingly, television artistes now outshine their cinema counterparts, in depth, range and even popularity. Take Dilip Dhawan, 36, one of the most visible stars on the tube, with over 10 prime time serials to his credit. A graduate of the Film and Television Institute of India, Dilip is a Method actor. He tries to answer three questions before essaying a role: what is the background of the relationship; where does the relationship stand; and what is the urgency of the scene.

Dilip's first major serial, Nukkad, was a runaway success and overnight he was stamped with the stereotype of Guru. Though he had done films, it was on television that his abilities as an actor were recognised. In Sankalp. he was the archetypal angry young vil-

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Plaza,

lager while in Pukaar he portrayed an urban 'liberated' husband. Both serials-telecast at the same time-ran neck-and-neck in popularity with an estimated viewership of about eight crore each. Despite this, he remains casual and down to earth. Sneakers, jeans and Tshirt, uncombed hair and a two-day stubble are his hallmark.

> In sharp contrast are the starry airs of

RATING STARS

To gauge the popularity of serials featuring these stars, IMRB devised a 'star value' index comparing these serials with all other prime-time serials since 1986, using inputs of 3,100odd adults in nine cities. The findings: "The viewership where the selected artistes appear was 15 per cent higher than all the 9 p.m. serials." Ad agencies' studies show that the 9 p.m. slot gets 40 per cent viewership, but the star-cast can raise it to 52 per cent.

list of sponsored programmes in the last few episodes with an impressive viewership of 10 crore. He is also the highest-paid, charging around Rs 22,000 per episode. He accepts only a single assignment at a time, and has recently signed up for Upanyas-a story of three generations.

Reclining on a pastel-coloured baithak in his flat on Yari Road-an isolated area of Bombay favoured by the NSD crowd-he rationalises his high fee. "There are actors who charge little and get into numerous serials. I am only interested in getting my due for rejecting 20 roles to accept one part." he declares. Pankaj quit NSD's Repertory Company after a tiff over acting in Richard Attenborough's Gandhi in 1981, and soon after landed the role of Karamchand on condition the detective was made an anti-hero. Thereafter, he has ensured that he does not get typecast, and has played a doctor in Lifeline, and a juggler in Kab Tak Pukaroon.

Another NSD product Ajit Vachani. moved from theatre because "television is paying; unlike theatre which gave me only bread, this gives me butter as well". Ajit earned recognition when he played a Sindhi husband, a 60-year-old villainous professor, and an author in three different serials telecast at the same time. Ajit, who gave a memorable per-

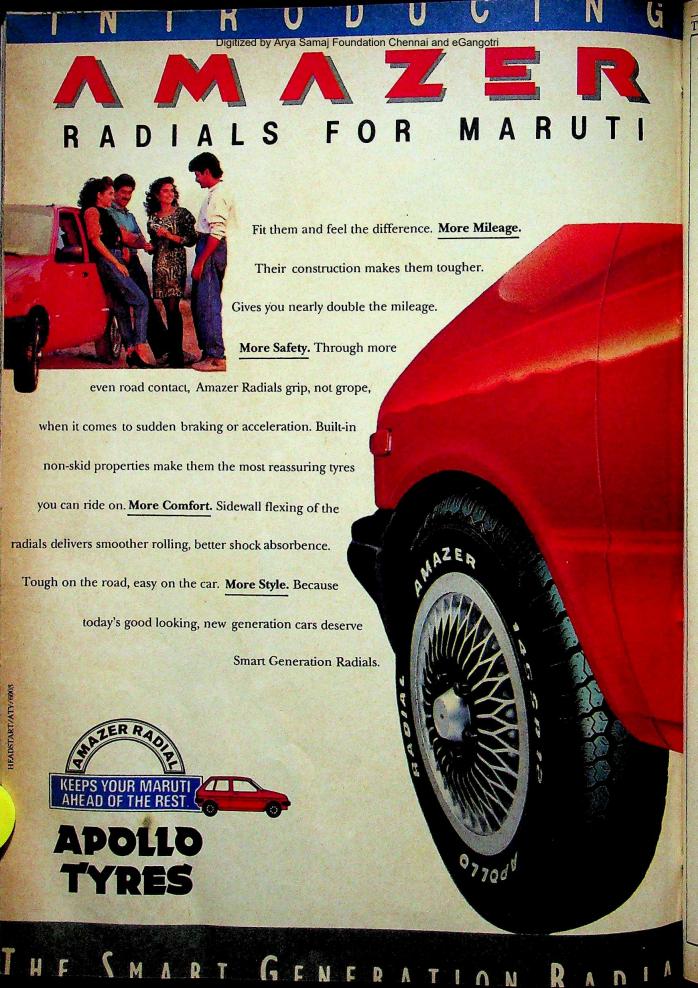
Neena Gupta, who declares superciliously when asked about her work: "Let others talk about me." She personifies glamour on the small screen. but with a first-rate acting talent. After Khandaan and Kabir, she gave a convincing performance in a double role in Shyam Benegal's Yatra. And now in Majdhar, she gives life to the difficult role of an old widow. It is not surprising that with over 15 serials to her credit. Neena is the most sought-after face on telecharging around Rs 10.000 per episode. The one actress who has outpaced Neena and the other stars in top billing is another graduate-Aneeta Kanwar (see box).

Among male stars, perhaps the most popular these days is Pankaj Kapoor, also an NSD graduate. Although he has appeared in only four serials, his latest, Phatichar, topped the

vision.



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di ro act a 90-year-old in Ramesh Sippy's Bandhan. He also has about 25 film roles in hand and sees television as the portals opening into films.

Both teeny-bopper heart-throb Shah Rukh Khan, 27, and small-screen siren Pallavi Joshi, 22, are candid about using television as a launching pad for the silver screen. While Pallavi has secured roles in six feature films, Shah Rukh has four in hand.

Yet, both are keen to retain their links with television. The petite Pallavi mesmerised viewers with her portrayal of Mriganavani-the 15th century liberated tribal queenin the serial of the same name. Her performance in over 12 serials has been critically acclaimed. Says Mriganayani director, Amol Palekar: "She has tremendous inner beauty and is not a calendar beauty. When she laughs, she makes you happy."

Pallavi has reason for her continuing association with television. "The viewership of one prime-time episode is equal to that of a silver jubilee hit film." she explains. Shah Rukh, who has



Kavita in Udagn: household name

made it big with just four serials, has more altruistic reasons. Says the star of Fauji and Circus: "I will return to television because I have to return what I got from it-a lot of fame."

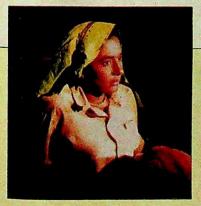
NOTHER star doing this return act is Kittu Gidwani, who jumped into the film world after her initial glamorous stint on television. She confesses: "What is important is exposure and TV gives you that."

The one person who has proved that beyond doubt is director-actress

Chowdhary. Kavita another NSD alumni. With just two serials-Udgan and its sequel Udaan II, the continuing story of a woman police officer-Kavita has become a household name. Says she: "Television is a potent medium and a platform into homes. It is the thing."

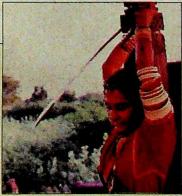
Significantly, this galaxy of stars has emerged despite the limitations of a single. government-controlled channel dictated by the whims of a

bureaucratic pen rather than by free market competition. With prime time sponsored serials limited to a mere 13 per week, these stars have risen to fame in the face of limited exposure and comparatively small money. As film maker Amit Khanna says: "If there were three options at 9 o'clock, there would really be stars. Because producers would be forced to pay more to attract popular actors." It is no wonder that Indian television is yet to throw up stars of the calibre of Bill Cosby, Michael J. Fox, and Bruce Willis, But with the current upsurge of talent, that too may be just a matter of time.



THE is perhaps the small screen's most versatile Pukaar. actress. In Aneeta Kanwar played six diverse roles in nine episodesfrom urban to rural, young to old. excelling in each.

But for the unwed NSD graduate. a student of E. Alkazi, even that wasn't enough. Says she: "One didn't get time to expand any one role." Aneeta, who had charged



ANEETA KANWAR

A Versatile Artiste

Rs 15,000 per episode in Pukaar, is one of the tube's highest paid performers. But she finds the medium a little too casual: "I don't want people to talk on the phone or eat when I'm performing," She prefers films, which she hopes will give her



The many faces of the talented star in Pukaar

"immortality".

She is described as a director's actress. Says Amol Palekar: "Aneeta surrenders completely to the director and starts from scratch." Her co-stars have often found her "too involved" with the character she portrays. But the audience is not complaining.

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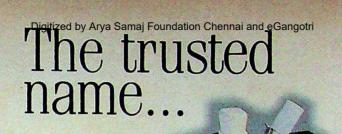
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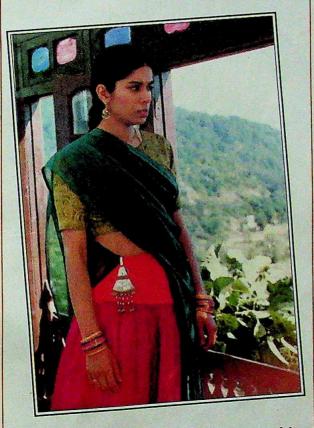
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- This time pp really had viewers rubbing their eyes in disbelief. Recently they screened Kumar Shahani's evocative film, Kasba. Obviously, some of the film had been cut but suddenly on the little screen there was actress Mita Vasisht sitting up in bed, nude from the waist up, in a pose inspired by Ingres' iconic painting, Odalisque, pp does seem to be getting a little less prissy and more adult of late. They even screened Prizzi's Honour which had Jack Nicholson and the sensual Kathleen Turner in amorous mode. Perhaps the reason for what might just be a pause to those snipping scissors could be, according to a Mandi House official, the increasing competition coming down from the skies-cable TV.
 - Once it was films and



A Bachchan and Tagore: in public interest



▲ Mita Vasisht in Kasba: Doordarshan goes candid



A Rameshwari and Saroj Sharma in Majhdhar; tearjerkers

serials on terrorism and natriotism, the two themes which worked like open sesame on Mandi House, Now, it's women. The more they suffer, the better. Tele-feminism has followed tele-patriotism. And there's a quiet little revolution going on on the small screen. After Pukaar and Sankalp, there is Ildaan II-and most recently Maihdhar, Each one tries to outdo the other in showing the suffering of

women, Maihdhar depicts the plight of widows in India and has a different heroine each time to help unfold the horror stories. The medium, however, might not be the message. Coming as they do between advertisements and at dinner hour, this almost daily dose of suffering doesn't quite pull at the heart strings.

 While most of the TV serials appear increasingly plain, some of the documentaries being screened show that Indian film makers are alive, well and making good films. Nilita Vachani's arresting film Eye of Stone, which probes the mind of a woman possessed, is just one of the few documentaries which confirms the sensitivity of some of the lesser-known film makers like Arun Khopkar, Vasudha Joshi and Ranjan Palit, Pankaj Butalia, Sanjeev Saith and many others. Vachani's film ought to be an eyeopener for the crop of serial makers who are merely serving up placebos on the plight of women. Her film's protagonist, Shanta, suffers from hysteria but this is actually her way of dealing with oppression. Most remarkable in the film is the invisibility of the camera in some of the acutely frank moments between her and her husband who wants to abandon her.

-MADHU JAIN

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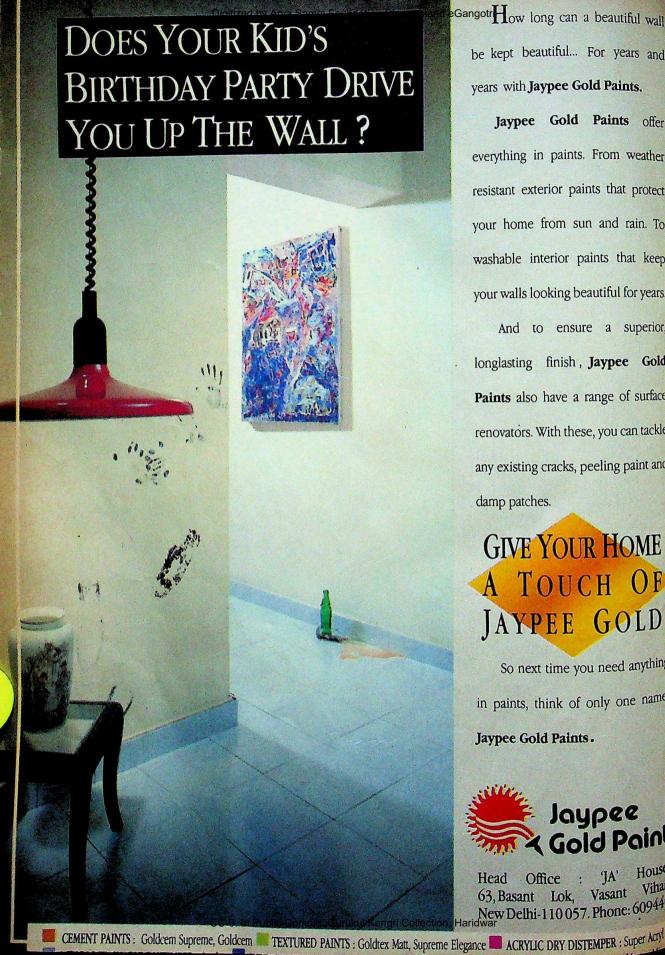


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N.T. RAMA RAO

Double Role Dilemma

Waffling between films and politics, the Telugu Desam supremo seems to be drifting away from the National Front

By AMARNATH K. MENON

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ANDAMURI Taraka Rama Rao has swapped the political platform for the silver screen so often he has forgotten which gallery he is playing to. By experimenting equally with governance and with grease-paint, the Telugu Desam supremo seems to have lost out on both vocations.

His recent decision to support Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao in the Nandyal by-election has virtually served up the constituency on a platter. And it has, naturally, embarrassed his National Front partners. But NTR is unperturbed. Says he proudly: "I am a Telugu like him and he is the first south Indian to be prime minister." And while the other National Front parties are beating their chests on the Congress(I)'s new quota policy. NTR has further ruffled

many of his compatriots' feathers by endorsing the Con-

gress(I) stand. But NTR's political career is once again riding pillion on the motorcycle of his movie ambitions. With the cameras rolling for his new movie. Samrat Asoka, NTR is putting the recent past behind him: the canning of his political career after he was unseated from the chief minister's chair two years ago, and the failure of his epic effort Brahmarishi Viswamitra. Slapping on the stage make-up and learning the lines by rote, the cacophonous, colourful and always watchable NTR show

And the man at the centre, sitting cross-

once again.

has hit the road

legged on a sofa in his son, Ramakrishna's home-a mirror and eyebrow pencils at his side-is knee-deep in the hype and hoopla of movie magic all over again. To be directed by his actor-son Balakrishna, NTR will be playing the title role in Samrat Asoka. Sitting back, he says: "The film has a simple political message. The country must be united, there should be no disparities and poverty must go." Forgotten is the decision arrived at nine months ago-that Viswamitra would be his last movie. In its place is a strong desire to wipe out the sinking of Viswamitra at the box-office and to show up long-time rival Akkineni Nageswara Rao, chosen for the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke Award.

But there is a dilemma. His party performed creditably during the stormy Legislative Assembly budget session. well enough to put the Congress(I) Chief Minister N. Janardhana Reddy on the backfoot with charges of corruption. So much so that the Telugu Desam even forced Reddy to withdraw several allegedly motivated directives. In fact, it was only in January that he said at a news conference in Hyderabad: "No government appears to be stable and likely to last for some time. I will, therefore, be preoccupied with politics and will have no chance to act." But he appears to have changed his mind since then. He is busy trying to persuade old-timers Bhanumathi and Lakshmi to act in his movie and spends a lot of time streamlining its script.

THE decision on Nandyal has elicited much talk of his having sold out to the Congress(I). Says a disgruntled Telugu Desam MLA: "There is a trade-off. A huge compensation for the destruction of the family cinemas in return for keeping out of Nandyal.' But Congress(I) leader G.V. Sudhakar Rao is pleased. Says he: "NTR's patriotism and sentimentalism will be

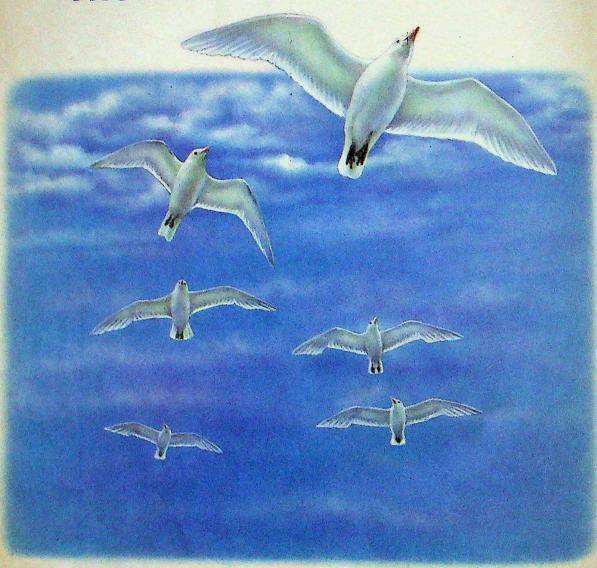
proven of worth if his party supports a Telugu prime minister in Parliament.'

But NTR's party members accuse him of double standards: especially since he has asked all his MLAs not to accept the offer of plots by the chief minister. NTR, however, be-

lieves that his personal magnetism is enough to offset any mistakes incurred through political ineptitude. Hence his total neglect of the party-he rarely visits the Telugu Desam headquarters at Gandipet, on the outskirts of Hyderabad, and hardly ever stays at the kuteeram (cottage) he built for himself there. He no longer runs any raining courses for key



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party workers either. He meets fewer partymen than he did as chief minister. leaving it to son-in-law and party General Secretary N. Chandrababu Naidu to manage the organisation. Says an apologetic Naidu: "A number of us are making sacrifices and devoting time to make the Telugu Desam stronger." State Revenue Minister D.L. Ravindra Reddy has another point of view. As he puts it: "Rama Rao is an apolitical animal who has ruined the state's economy by destroying the cooperative credit structure and tampering with a number of financial institutions to fund his schemes. And he can never win positive votes."

But in a party run on the charismatic principle, few dare to speak up against his authoritarianism. And if they do, they are cut down in midcampaign by NTR. The case of former party general secretary P. Upendra is one such. He was abruptly removed from the leadership of the parliamentary party-a hurt that must rankle with the former confidant (see box). What is worse, even in his nepotistic dealings, NTR plays favourites. He

oscillates wildly between sons-in-law Naidu and D. Venkateswara Rao for political counsel. Says former Telugu Desam MP Bezwada Papi Reddy: "Important party members are to be used and passed over like doormats.'

UT there wasn't always such discontent. In 1982, NTR created a stir by announcing he would enter the political arena. He was 60 and the target of many humorous potshots by the Congress(I). However it was he who laughed all the way to the state Assembly when his party triumphed in the 1983 elections. And continued laughing as his government held its own despite abysmal administration, poor political acumen, and no strategy worth its salt. But when the Congress(I) finally got its act together in 1989, his populist gimmicks fell flat. He was edged out of the chief minister's seat and turned a sullen recluse. That

was till the Lok Sabha elections this year, which showed a widespread disaffection with the current rai.

But NTR is yet to translate this into votes. Says Rajva Sabha member and disillusioned close aide Renuka Choudary: "Women in the party feel marginalised even though they are the major source of his electoral strength." If he is not quick off the blocks, she feels, other parties, notably the BJP, may just sprint away with the votes. And his whimsical decisions may force the National Front constituents, Janata Dal, CPI and CPI(M), to drift away. Add to this his taste for vaudeville-last month he threatened to stop wearing saffron because he seemed like a saint among sinners-and you have a tale of a man who would rather be raja for a day than pradhan for life. Perhaps it is just that 35 years under the arclights can never be outshone by the nine years in political spotlight.

TELUGU DESAM

nd D

Family First

OR N.T. Rama Rao, family comes first. Former Telugu Desam parliamentary party leader P. Upendra realised it a little too late. Soon after NTR's son-inlaw D. Venkateswara Rao was elected to the Lok Sabha, he replaced Upendraalthough there is no official declaration to that effect.

On paper, three-time Lok Sabha member B. Vijaya Kumar Raju is floor leader while former policy-framer Minte Padmanabhan is leader of the party in the Rajya Sabha-a post reportedly offered to, and turned down by, Upendra, But it is common knowledge that neither sees eye to eye with the other. There is enough tension to defuse and Venkateswara Rao takes full advantage of it.

With N. Chandrababu Naidu as Telugu Desam general secretary. NTR now has trusted kin in key party posts. And Upendra, who quit his job in the railways to join the Telugu Desamin 1982, is out in the cold. The former general secretary of the National Front had emerged as the unacknowledged number two in the party, and as his clout grew, so did NTR's dislike. But NTR's own attempts at storming national centrestage came to nothing-in fact, he had to depend on Upendra for national mileage. And with the National Front constituents losing out in Andhra Pradesh as well as at the Centre, NTR has become sceptical of

the utility of an anti-Congress(I) umbrella organisation.

Both deny there are any differences. But neither NTR nor other party members consult Upendra, who is playing his cards close to his chest at the moment. Significantly though, Upendra-who now shuttles between New Delhi and Hyderabad-is in touch with discontented MPs and MLAs in the party. A denouement could well be in the offing.

-AMARNATH K. MENON



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Taste of Modernity

Roadside eateries across the country are rapidly shedding their downmarket image, and acquiring both modern trappings and a new clientele.

By TARUN J. TEJPAL with bureau reports

FF the Ambala bus-stand, on a wide signboard, the parti-coloured plumage of a cockatoo is flung back in a passionate, if macabre, exhortation: "Meet me anywhere, but eat me at Deluxe." The rush at the dhaba and the scores of glistening fingers busy in gravy suggest the invitation has been heeded.

And not only in that town. The Deluxe cockatoo's words are finding echoes across the country as dhabas swiftly shed their downmarket image of being truckers' stake-outs where the food is cheap but the ambience insufferable, and acquire the trappings of modernity. Pushed by competition and fuelled by the consumerist boom, the ubiquitous Indian dhaba, punctuating every highway with the promise of rest and repast, is busy replacing its shanty structures of thatch and bamboo with brick and tile. And finding place in these rooms are modern gadgets and attractive furniture.

Till only a few years ago, the dhaba across the country was the very picture of functionality pared to its bones. It was a mere makeshift serai with a couple of charpous, wooden boards for tables, and a handful of dented aluminium utensils. It catered to only one client, the trucker, and that client ate on a lean budget and cared little for frills. What mattered to him was the food, which, in any case. was all that the two-odd men running the dhaba were capable of providing.

But now all along the highways bisecting lush fields, arid plains, and vertiginous hills in Punjab, Harvana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and other states, thousands of dhabas are giving way to pressing demands for more comfort, finer food, and better

communication facilities. Dhaba owners now have fridges, deep freezes, gas burners, TV sets, video systems, STD facilities and their own transport to ferry weekly stocks. Explains Kishore Sharma, owner of Mana Dhaba on the Jaipur-Jabalpur National Highway 12: "We have invested money in facilities like water coolers because even truckdrivers now demand cold water.'

When Sharma says 'even truckdrivers', he clearly implies that the rest of his clientele is much more demanding. The new customer at the dhaba is the middle class service or businessman. who now journeys without his rolls of packed puris. More often still, this person is a new entrant to the eating-out culture, and he takes his family along: the dhaba provides the ideal outing, it is easy on his pocket and it doesn't intimidate with etiquette and elan as

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RAJENDRA DHABA

IT lies 28 km from Hyderabad, on the Karimnagar highway. The swings, lawn, and liquor shop make it distinct. It is mostly packed. Gurudev Singh Parmar, owner, a former IAF technician. caters for about 250 on weekdays. Chicken dishes cost around Rs 50. Service takes 10 minutes. Collections: Rs 2,000-Rs 3,000 on weekdays. Besides, on his 2.4 acre farm, Gurudev grows paddy and maintains cattle. "All I buy is masalas from the city," says the owner. -A.K. MENON



"It is cheaper to have a party here. The latest budget has made it too expensive to drink and eat in an air-conditioned bar and restaurant in the city."

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fancier restaurants and hotels do. Says Jagdish Uphwalla, a rich businessman eating at Pahelwan Da Dhaba near Nagpur: "I come here often with my family. The food and atmosphere are great, and the amenities are getting better every year.'

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The improvements are a direct upshot of the growing competition. As customers like Uphwalla increase, dha-

bas are becoming a lucrative business, many earning thousands of rupees daily. This has led to a distinct change in the attitudes of those owning land along the highways. Earlier. they would let out space to dhaba owners or sell it. Now they prefer to go into business themselves. Says Harjit Singh, who started a dhaba two years ago on the Chandigarh-Jalandhar highway: "It has been a revelation. I earn from the dhaba, spread over square yards, three times more than I did

from my entire three

acres of land.' A recent upmarket entrant is Amrik Singh who returned from England two years ago and opened Amar Dhaba on the Jalandhar-Ludhiana highway with facilities like a garden, toilets and specialist dishes like chilly-chicken. Yet he had the acumen to remain conscious of

"We must modernise, there is so much competition. I now want a line where you can make STD calls."

JOGA SINGH, Owner

PAHELWAN DA DHABA

FIFTEEN years ago, a wrestler from Karnal moved to Nagpur, and opened a dhaba on Highway 7. Hari Singh Pahelwan, a Jat Sikh, began by selling tea, but soon graduated to mutton and chicken. Five years ago, his sons, Sabh and Joga, began to modernise. and now the dhaba boasts three fridges, a TV, a deep freeze, a generator and a video. The clientele includes the middle class. Business ranges Rs 1,500 to Rs 3,000 daily. The speciality is butter chicken, and celebrities like Dara Singh and Dharmendra have eaten here. --- G. PEREIRA



"Fridge, TV, STD—the truckers now demand more and more facilities."

DARSHAN SINGH, Owner

VINDHYACHAL DHABA .

IN the lonely, sylvan ranges of Vindhyachal, a breakdown could be trying, were it not for the newly-acquired facilities of dhabas like Vindhyachal. You walk in, ring for rescue, and eat while you wait. Nestled in a grove on **Bhopal-Nagpur** highway, the dhaba's facilities amaze: STD, fridge, TV. Next summer come desert-coolers. The cuisine is limited but of top quality. Channa masala and kheer are specialities, and Rs 10 buys a meal. Peak season rush: 1,000-1,500. -N.K. SINGH



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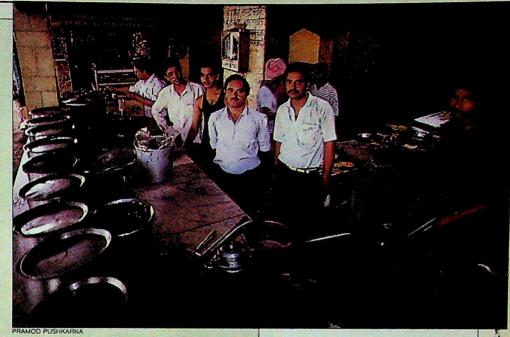
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AHUJA DHABA

ON the Delhi-Chanhighway, digarh Murthal's Ahuia Dhaba boasts marble-top tables, a garden, rabbit hutch and a ladies toilet. Two decades ago it had charpoys and one cook; today it has eight cooks, 12 waiters. "We can serve 150 people at a time," says the owner. A meal for four costs about Rs 50. There is a fridge, and an electronics shop. Owner K.L. Ahuja also caters for parties and woos the car clien tele.

-H. BAWEJA



"We can serve as many as 150 people at the same time."

ASHOK KUMAR, Owner's Nephew

the peculiar profile of the dhaba patron. Which is why the facade of his dhaba is strewn with charpous while the chairs and tables are tucked away in the backyard. Explains Amrik Singh: "Punjab today is a curious mix of rusticity and urbanity and we cater to both.'

What is true for Puniab is true for

the rest of the country. And as eating places go. the dhaba is becoming the perfect symbol of the rural-urban mix that characterises India. Those who eat at dhabas want better facilities, but without losing the special rustic ambience, that oldworld atmosphere that in a way invokes each person's link with primeval agricultural roots. In some other ways too, the dhaba remains unchanging. Tarka dal and butter chicken continue to be hot favourites: dhabas continue to function around the clock; Punjabis, especially Sikhs, still dominate the trade; and a resounding meal can still be had in tens of rupees.

So even as owners tack on lurid signboards, swank up interiors, and string up pulsating coloured lights on trees, they ensure they stick to their essence, and their moorings. For as Sabh Singh, a dhaba owner in Maharashtra says: "You cannot build a dhaba in the city. A dhaba has to be on a highway, that's where the magic is."

ZAMINDAR DHABA

TO utilise his milk, Natha Singh, dairy owner near Ludhiana, started a dhaba in 1984. Last year he shifted to Sahnewal on the Ludhiana-Delhi highway; today the dhaba is famous. Lassiis the speciality-about 230 litres are consumed daily, and it is churned in a huge electric machine. The dhaba nets around Rs 6,000 a day. It seats 125, but queues are common. Besides travellers, it caters to Ludhiana citizens.

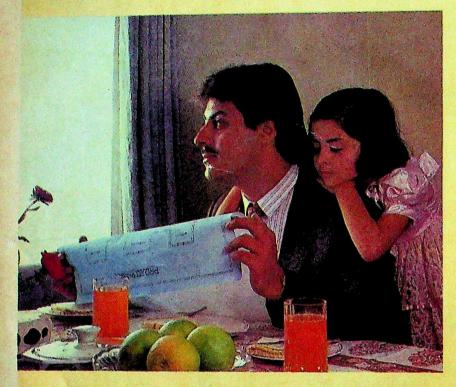
-K. SANDHU

"The lassi and butter are a welcome change-often our children prefer them to even their favourite noodles."

DR MAHESH KUMAR, A Customer

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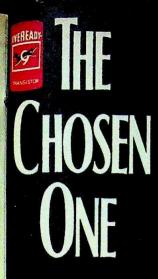
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Ehas never heard of Ajit jokes. He does not understand why people try to sell ketchup using the 'Lily, don't be silly' gag. He is surprised when street urchins sidle up to him and croak 'Mona Daarrling...' Hamid Ali Khan is behind times. He does not know he is a legend.

The Ajit legend grew while the man himself languishedfar away from all the tinseltown action. Some thought he was dead. Others that he was seriously ill.

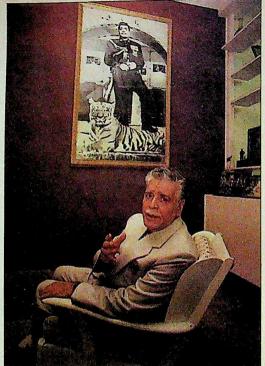
The much-missed prodigal has just returned from his selfimposed exile of seven years. The itch to work again? Perhaps. The return is as quiet as his exit. Yes, 'Bass' is back-in Salim Akhtar's Police Officer.

Ajit's 70-odd years-he's coy about his age-sit lightly on his shoulders. He looks fit, almost like he did in 1984 when he retired to a farmhouse in Hyderabad, There's a slight reluctance to raise his neck before a camera—a hint of wrinkles. And when you have convinced him he is a cult figure, he tries to guess why. "Perhaps people just wanted to hear my lines and when they could not any more, they made

them up," he says. But the thought that these should be called jokes does not amuse him at all. He is still unreformed.

Ajit's back to playing 'the villainous boss'. As he puts it: "I can never play a good old man. All of them are such becharas that it won't suit me." Sadashiv Amrapurkar and Gulshan Grover will act, he says, as his henchmen. And Mona Darling? "Uska abhi tak shot nahin aya hai." (She has not come into the picture yet.)

Things are as they should be, he feels, and good, old-fashioned villainy is back where it belongs. "I hate this



HAMID ALI KHAN

Lethal Lip

Cult villain Ajit is back

new fad of double entendres." Give him a few gunmen, a gang moll and a couple of smart one-liners any day. Ajit is in his element.

'Villain mein bhi kuchh mardangi honi chahiye." (Villains too should be macho to some extent), he feels. His favourite description of himself is a line of his from Kalicharan: "Sara shahar mujhe Lion ke naam se jaanta hai'' (The city knows me as Lion). And as Lion (pronounced Loin) returns to his turf. he realises how much he missed it. The Pathan fire flickers for a moment."I quit because I felt humiliated. I came back because my son insulted me."

Ajit: menacing one-liners

Why did he leave? The day he decided to stop acting started like any other. It was 1984 and after 38 years in the movies, Ajit reported punctually for shooting at 10 a.m. Within minutes, he says, he was ready for the shot, with a fake beard on his face and real menace in his eyes. The young hero did not show up till 4.30 p.m."I had nothing to do but stare at myself. I decided I did not have to put up with all this." He quit.

Stories abounded that he was unwell, finished. The man's memory faded and the legend took over. It began quietly enough, with students raising their eyebrows, Ajitfashion and mimicking "Isko liquid oxygen mein daal do. Liquid ise jeene nahin dega, oxygen ise marne nahin dega." (Put him in liquid oxygen. The liquid won't let him live and oxygen won't let him die.)

Soon, the fad became a cot-

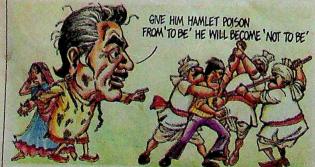
tage industry, with everyone concocting an Ajit-style oneliner. Cassettes and advertisements followed. And all the while, the man himself was

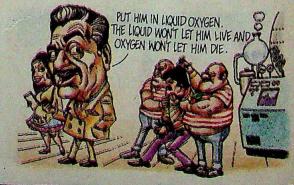
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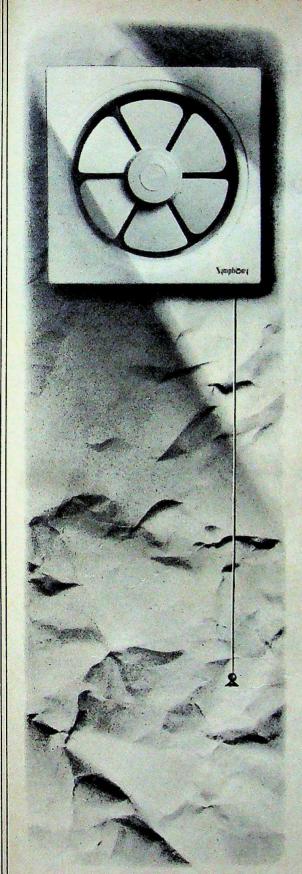
Aiit says the day his son misbehaved with him, he shut himself up in his room and took out his revolver. But then someone knocked at the door."I felt ashamed of myself," he says. The incident that nearly took his life prompted him to return.

But he will be selective. As of now, he just has one film in hand. "Someone toldme he had just the role for me-in a movie called Tu Mera Baap, Main Tera Baap (You're my Dad, I'm your Dad)." The eyebrows rise in amused scorn. Then, seeing the cameraman, the lips widen."Meri hyena smile, Raaberrt."

-RAHUL PATHAK







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OR Indian Airlines (IA), trouble seems to come in plane loads. Last year, with the Bangalore air crash and the grounding of its A320 fleet, the airline believed that the going certainly couldn't get any rougher. Until this year came along.

Now, aviation experts are predicting a corporate crash more disastrous than the one that occurred in Imphal recently. Apart from a tattered safety record, plummeting passenger traffic, mounting fuel and repair costs, and intractable union problems threaten to cripple the airline, with an anticipated loss of Rs 250 crore or more. Admits Air-Marshal S.S. Ramdas, 1A's chairman: "Things are pretty bad."

Just how bad is being brought home to the airline's management only now. In March this year, 1A declared a loss of Rs 64 crore for 1991-92. Now, that seems like wishful thinking. Since April, the airline has already chalked up a loss of Rs 53.48 crore. And its finance department estimates that the devaluation will cost an additional Rs 98 crore for import of spares and servicing of engines, while the 20-per cent fuel price hike will set it back by a whopping Rs 100 crore. Apart from this, insurance companies are likely to hike the premiums for aircraft after the Imphal crash.

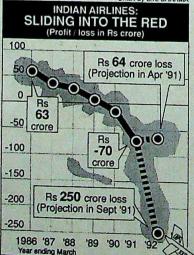
The sharp drop in passenger traffic has added to its woes. In 1988, over one crore people travelled on 1A, but last year the figure dipped to 78 lakh. Things seem to be no better today. While in May, there was a marginal improvement with a daily average of

27,000 passengers, the figure has since dropped to 22,000 a day.

Ramdas attributes this decline in passenger traffic to the general recession in the economy. "It is a global phenomenon," he explains. "When air services were hit during the Gulf war, many businessmen realised they could do business without actually travelling." A senior IA official even says it is fortunate that the A320s are being reinducted in a phased manner. So far, only 12 of the 18 are back in operation. Had all taken wing, IA's losses would have been higher.

There are other problems though. Over a third of IA's scheduled flights are delayed or cancelled. And the pilottraining programme—brought into focus with the rise in pilot errors and

Chart by B.K. SHARMA



The A320: declining traffic

reinduction of the A320s—has received a major setback. IA's latest management information report shows that between April and July this year, the airline managed to put in less than half the number of training hours it had planned. The pilots also demanded that everyone eligible to be a check-pilot should get the grade. But since check-pilots are essential to training, the whole programme has been put back by three months.

Other forms of unionism continue to dog IA. The engineers, demanding parity with their counterparts in Air India, went on a go-slow for several months. And only last month was the management able to convince them to end the go-slow till a solution is worked out.

Ironically, while every single figure in the management information report showed a decline, at least one factor registered a gain: overtime for employees in all departments, which jumped to Rs 3.7 crore between April and July this year, a 50-per cent upswing compared to corresponding figures last year.

Meanwhile, Ramdas is making a determined bid to weather the storm. He has promised not to cut operations even when the full impact of the losses hits the airline. Says the beleaguered chairman: "This may well be the most crucial year in 1A's history. As of now, no one can say whether the passengers

will come back. We can only hope they will." For IA's sake, they have to.

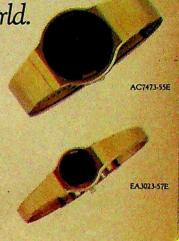
—RAHUL PATHAK





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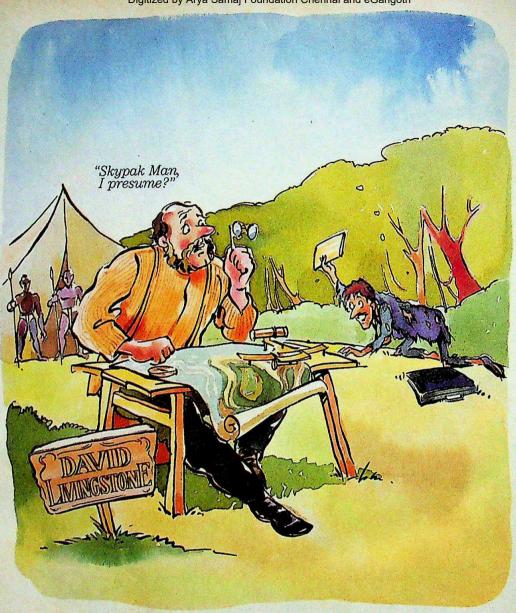
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A New Equation

ENERAL, where are you hijacking the assistant secretary to? I was asked. I replied I was only taking Richard Armitage to my private washroom so he could meet the Soviet adviser I keep hidden behind the john! This was at a briefing session in Delhi during the visit of the US defence secretary and his team in 1986. I was irked by their belief that the Indian defence forces depended a lot upon Soviet advisers. Similarly we Indians held a number of wrong notions about the US. We have come a long way since 1986, and are beginning to build a much closer relationship with the US.

The prospects for close relations are indeed bright. I can see no major area of potential disagreement. There could be strains regarding India's need for a nuclear deterrent; likewise, there could be problems if India aggressively rallied the 'South' in the demand for a new economic and technological order. Even these issues, if handled honestly, with maturity and devoid of shrill moralising, should not be intractable.

If the unstated reason for the US not wanting India or Pakistan to go overtly nuclear is the antipathy to seeing nonwhite, and therefore by definition unreliable, countries getting this capability. it would be futile to discuss this issue further. But I do not think that this is a

majority view in the US: perhaps not even a substantial minority subscribes to this thinking. On the other hand there is a narrow, shrill, anti-India school in segments of American society including Congress. The reasons are diverse: the need to cultivate an electorate that has pro-Khalistan or pro-Kashmiri militant elements; an unthinking carry-over from Cold War attitudes which saw India as pro-Soviet; and genuine, if somewhat larger-than-life concerns regarding human rights violations in India. The list can be long, but those who belong to this school are only a small minority, and no amount of salesmanship on our part is going to swing this group in the short haul. I do not think there is any point in our addressing them; it is best that we leave it to time to mellow their attitudes.

At the other end, there is a small but influential group, in Congress(I), in the officialdom and in the academic community that believes the time is past for non-proliferation efforts in South Asia: that proliferation has already occurred; that the urgent need is to ensure that the nuclear balance of terror stays at a low level in the region; and that all steps are taken to ensure that nuclear deterrence is effective and stable. Towards this end they would like to see the big powers act as 'honest brokers' in bringing about a China-Pakistan understanding. They believe that the big powers could also underpin such an understanding with their technological



The prospects for close relations between India and the US are bright. The few contentious issues, if handled honestly, with maturity and devoid of shrill moralising, should not be intractable.

be strengthened to converting majority to this line of thinking

This large group in the middle is generally motivated by all the right reasons. To name two: prevention of increased risk of nuclear danger, and saving poor countries from squandering their limited resources on arms. They take only vague cognizance of the fact that non-certification by the US President implies that perhaps Pakistan has already weaponised; that axiomatically India would follow suit. if it had not already done so; and that once proliferation occurs, it cannot be reliably undone. They tend to believe that if the situation is frozen, it would be preferable to accepting openly that two more countries have joined the nuclear weapons club. There are some in our country also who hold similar views. Is this last formulation really true?

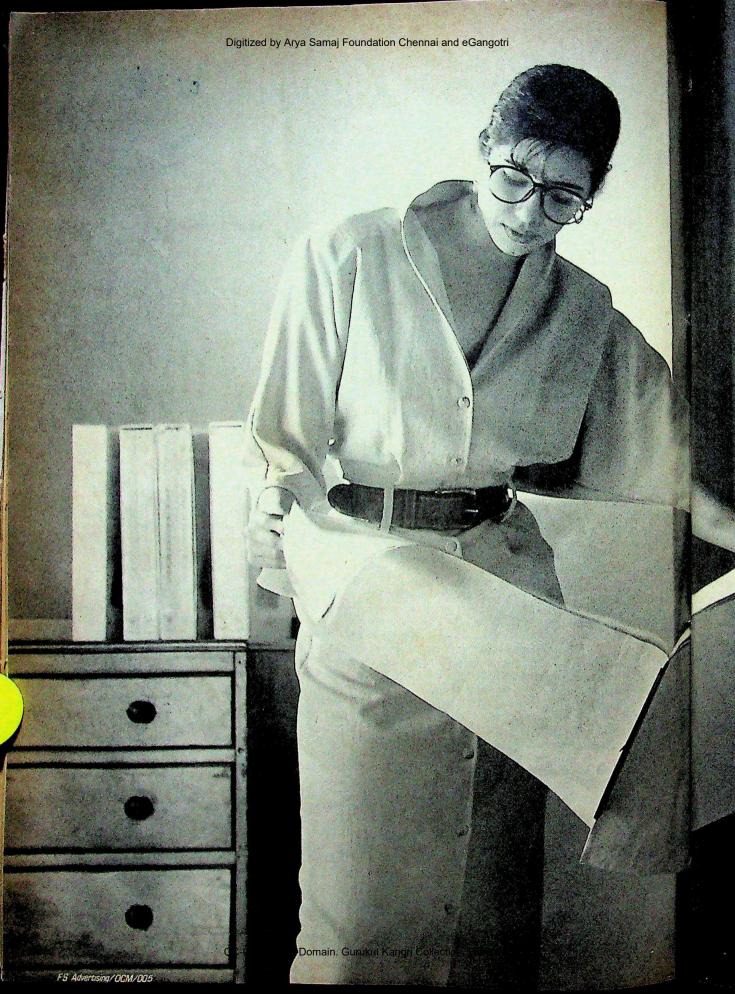
The pro-freeze school argues that it is generally accepted that both countries have weaponised. Even though undeclared and ambiguous, the situation has created a de facto minimum deterrent situation. This confers all the benefits of a declared status and makes war between the two countries something which cannot be undertaken for reasons other than the very survival of the nation. So why go for a declared status, which may lead to nuclear arms

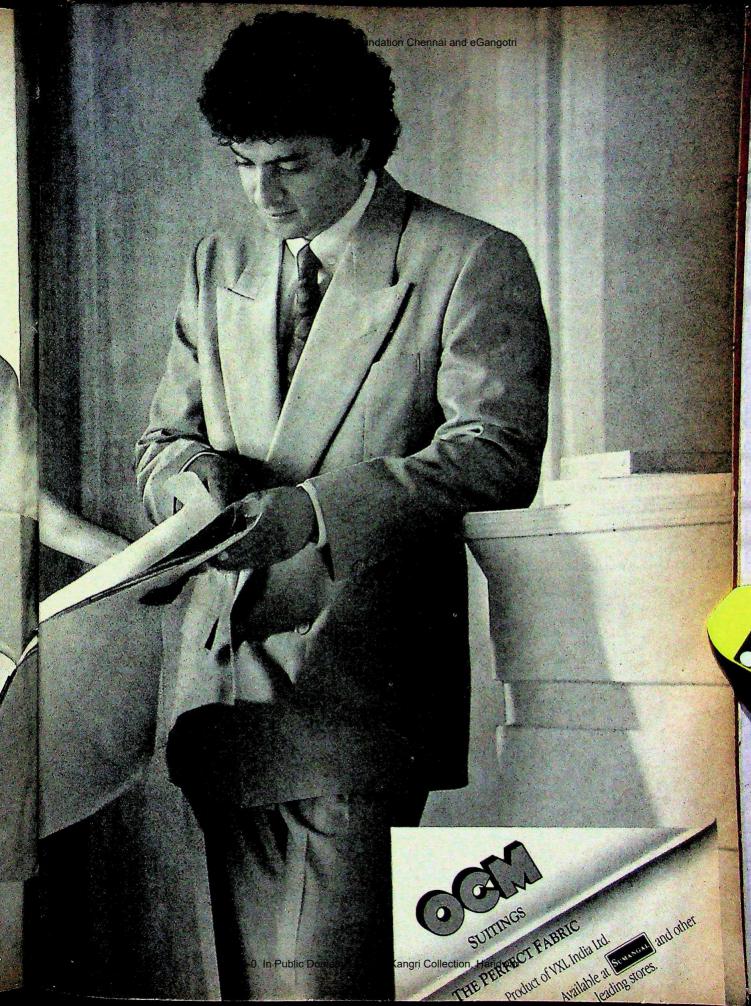
racing and also encourage further proliferation?

The assumption that an ambiguous state will prevent arms racing is wrong. I believe, it is most likely that both sides would take counsel of their fears and over-insure. In a declared situation, there is at least scope for some transparency, which may allay their worst fears and limit mindless arms racing. Given that both sides possess nuclear weapons. an undeclared situation would:

- prevent both from declaring a 'no first use' policy.
- prevent dialogue on doctrinal matters. Doctrinal understanding could reduce chances of war by miscalculation.
- prevent laving down constitutionally, a political chain of command for authorisation of nuclear retaliation if deterrence fails. This could result in unauthorised use.
- prevent the overt laying down of the military chain of succession for authorising weapons release and delivery instructions. As also the promulgation of the safety and control measures needed for preventing the loss of nuclear weapons or their accidental or unauthorised use.

This list can be longer. But I think I've made my case. Given that once the Rubicon is crossed, proliferation cannot be undone, an indefinitely undeclared nuclear weapon capability on the part of India and Pakistan is a prescription for disaster. This is the point we must press on the US. Let not posterity say that acting for the best of reasons, we ensured know-how and surveillance capabilities. This group needs to 🕯 the happening of the very thing we sought to prevent.





The New Colonialism

The British have left India, but imperialism still marks the cultural encounters between the two countries, writes Mark Tully, the noted BBC correspondent, in his new book No Full Stops in India. An exclusive pre-publication extract from his book.

THE celebrated Indian writer Nirad C. Chaudhuri, who now lives in Oxford, dedicated his Autobiography of an Unknown Indian to the memory of the British Empire, saying 'all that was good and living within us was made, shaped, and quickened by the same British rule'. I admire Nirad Chaudhuri's scholarship, I envy him his felicity of style, I enjoy his humour but I profoundly disagree with his views. Emperors don't quicken their subjects' cultures: they kill them. So, if Nirad Chaudhuri is right, there was nothing worthwhile in India before the Rai, which would have been truly remarkable for a culture

that had survived so long. That wasn't even the view of the British who ruled India. They studied Sanskrit and the Hindu scrip-

tures, they wrote grammars of modern Indian languages and they preserved India's ancient monuments. But the Rai could not have survived if we British had not been convinced of our own superiority, and so few Britons could not have ruled so vast a country if they had not also created an Indian elite who shared their conviction that British culture was inherently superior to their own. We were clever, not crude, rulers, and we realised the dangers of going too fast and too far-of the sort of resentment which caused the Indian Mutiny or the First War of Independence, whichever way you look at it. That was why we concentrated our efforts on creating that small elite and left the rest of India to itself. That elitethe India which applauds Nirad Chaudhuri-took over the reins from us and we continue to exercise our cultural hegemony over them-a hegemony preserved by the conviction that we are superior.

Cultural exchanges are one of the more subtle ways of imposing cultural imperialism. They create the impression that we respect Indian culture, while at the same time giving us the

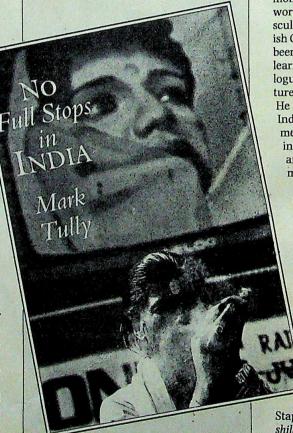
opportunity to exhibit our own superiority, or what we believe is our superiority. Over the last 10 years or so, India has been persuaded to hold a number of festivals in foreign countries-significantly, Britain led the field. The festivals of India undoubtedly increased interest in things Indian but they had no radical effect on life in our countries.

In the small seaside town of Mahabalipuram, about 30 miles south of Madras, I came across a remarkable example of cultural imperialism through cultural exchange. It was the catalogue of the sculpture by the English artist Stephen Cox exhibited at the Delhi Triennial

in 1986. Cox had spent some months in Mahabalipuram working with Indian temple sculptors. An official of the British Council told me that Cox had been given a scholarship 'to learn and to teach'. The catalogue stated: 'Cox's art of sculpture is continually developing. He does not bring with him to India an inflexibly alien instrument, but one capable of growing by response to the rocks and to the human achievement that he finds.

> If I understand that aright, it means that Cox had gone to Mahabalipuram to learn about the culture of its sculptors and had then allowed that culture to influence his work. In Mahabalipuram, however, that was not the accepted view of what had actually happened. Ganapathi Stapati was the principal of the College of Architecture and Sculpture, and it was to him that Cox had turned for guidance.

Stapati comes from a long line of shilpis, who are both architects and sculptors. His father was the first principal of the college in Mahabalipuram, and Stapati succeeded him. He had recently retired and was living in a small house on the main street. I asked him how much Stephen Cox had learnt of this ancient culture, and was somewhat taken aback when the mild-mannered sculp-



Cultural exchanges show we respect Indian culture while allowing us to exhibit our 'superiority'.



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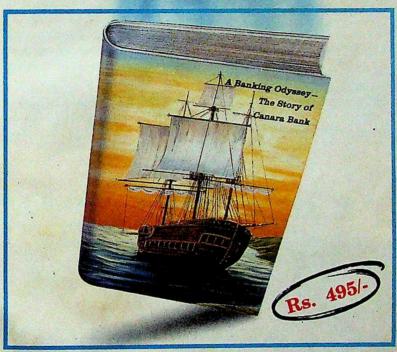
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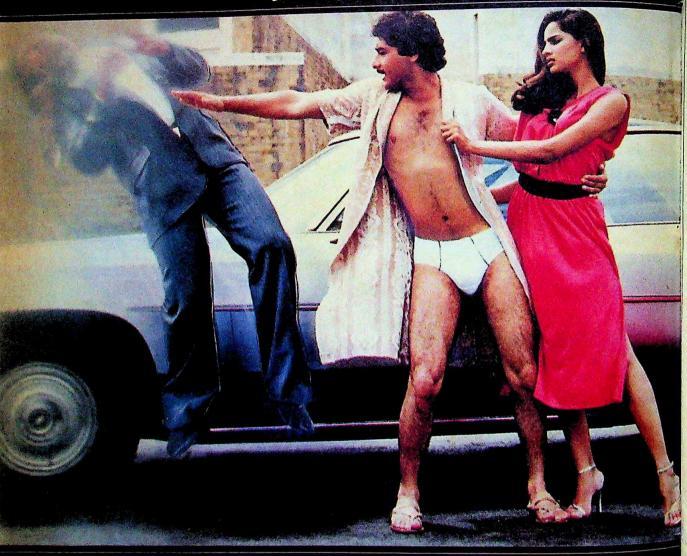
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tor replied: 'He never learnt anything from me. I used to talk to him about spiritual things and sculpture, but he would say to me: "When I am with you I experience what you mean; as soon as I leave the room I lose it. What can I do? That is my culture." It is my opinion that he did zero here.

'He still has people working for him here. He is very commercial. He hasn't understood my craftsmen, my

people. We are real creative artists. He is doing mechanical work; he is not moved; he is not aroused.'

far.

thought perhaps the two sculptors had got across each other—that there had been a personality clash—but Stapati said: 'I liked Stephen. He was honest and kind, I deliberately did not interfere in his work.'

Contrary to the claim of the catalogue, there had not, in Stapati's view, been any meeting of cultures. He believed that Cox had learnt nothing from Mahabalipuram, and Stapati had certainly not been inspired by the western sculptor's art. When I asked him for his views on modern art, he looked across at Sasikala, the wiry and energetic architect who had introduced us, as if to ask whether she felt he was going too

far. She smiled and Stapati, encouraged, let rip.

'In the name of modern art you have dispensed with the spiritual element of art. The whole world is carried away by these trends. We don't vibrate to modern art. The old masters like Michelangelo, they do affect us—they had imagination. Those who look at modern works and say: "How beautiful!" are hypocrites.'

Stapati said: 'Stephen Cox never made the attempt to learn. He never questioned or asked my people. There are people who have learnt Carnatic music—they study for years. Sculptors could learn too. The British Council should send me one boy of 15 or 16 and

leave him with me for six years. I will make him a master sculptor. Cox could not even work in our granite, he needed two or three years' work to master it. He couldn't do that, so we gave him people to work for him. He could only put some finishing touches.'

Sasikala and Stephen Cox did not see eye to eye. She felt that the English artist condescended to her hero, Stapati. She told me angrily: 'He used to make sneering remarks to me while Stapati was talking—remarks like: "He doesn't understand," and "They have been doing the same things for hundreds of years. It has lost its meaning for today." He seemed to think that I would agree with him, although I don't know why. He talked down to Stapati, but I don't think he could help it. With his learning and his success, he thinks he has to be superior. I think that this is inbred in the British, that they think they are superior.'

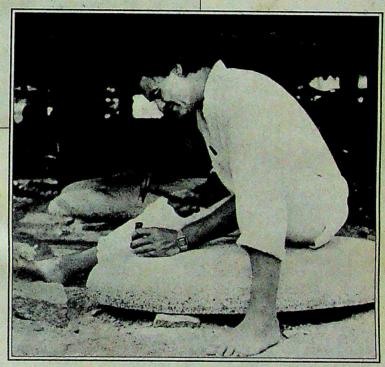
I showed Sasikala the British Council catalogue, After

reading a few pages she threw it back, saying: 'It's bullshit. These people are very clever with words, but what does it actually mean? Read it time and again and you will only get more confused.' She was equally dismissive of Cox's work....

I realised that there must be more to Stephen Cox's art than using Indian ideas without fully understanding them. I also realised that I was not qualified to appreciate

what that was, so I went to see V. Arunachalam, the young Indian sculptor who had worked with Cox and was still working for him. I thought he would provide a counterbalance to the views of the traditionalists. He had a small yard opposite to the drive of the hotel in which I was staying, about a mile out of Mahabalipuram. Arunachalam also came from a family of sculptors and had been taught by

Stephen Cox regarded Stapati's work not as art but as craft. Stapati felt Cox had learnt nothing at Mahabalipuram.



Stephen Cox: failing to bridge the gap

Stapati but, unlike his guru, he wore a shirt and tight trousers. He said Cox had picked him because he was one of the few students of the college who spoke English well, and the two had struck up a good relationship.

Unlike Stapati, Arunachalam had grown to like abstract art, but he could not sell it in Mahabalipuram. He showed me with pride photos of the statues he had carved for Cox. He had shipped three containers full of sculptures to Cox in the previous year. 'Stephen sends me the drawings and I carve them. He puts the finishing touches.'

Cox was hurt that Stapati, a man whom he admired, had so misunderstood him. Nevertheless, he admitted he regarded Stapati's work not as art but as craft. He also did not feel the spiritual element in the traditional carving at Mahabalipuram. Cox said: "The obsessiveness in the craft

of Stapati's work sterilises it. I find the deification of simple objects-sometimes just a pile of bricks in a wayside shrine-more spiritual. They have been worshipped for years and are the byproducts of devotion.'

was puzzled. Stephen Cox was clearly a very sensitive and gentle person, so I couldn't understand why he wanted to work in Mahabalipuram if he didn't regard the town's carving as art. He explained to me: 'I was drawn to the place. I had never been anywhere like it before. The sound of hammers tapping everywhere from morning to night. The chance to put two feet into an environment that could trace its sculpture links with devotion in an unbroken skein reaching back to antiquity. You mustn't get me wrong—I admire Stapati as a great craftsman and a great temple architect, but I never went to Mahabalipuram to sit at his feet or to learn temple carving.

I asked him about Stapati's allegation that Cox couldn't carve granite: that he would need two or three years' continuous work to master it. He replied: 'I can get

anything I want out of a block of stone. I don't think it's necessary to do rough work, although I am capable of doing anything that is necessary. Stapati insists that a carver must learn his craft. This is a fundamental difference between an artist and a craftsman. Anvone can learn a craft.'

I admitted to Cox I found it easier to understand Stapati's work than his. He smiled and said: 'You have only talked to Stapati and his disciples. There are Indian artists who admire my work.' Cox was on his way back from Mahabalipuram after spending some time working with Arunachalam. Isaid: 'You object to my describing your studio in Mahabalipuram as

an example of modern colonialism, but it seems to me you are doing exactly what the colonialists did: you are using cheap labour and raw material, finishing it yourself and selling it at a large profit.'

'I wouldn't say it was colonialism,' Cox replied; 'I'd say it's sound economics. I came here with a brief to carve for three months, but having been able to set up a system of working it seemed a terrible waste to let it go.' Then he laughed: 'Actually it's not that sound economics. It costs me a lot to come here and a lot to ship the work, and I also pay my workers more than others do in Mahabalipuram. The rewards are not that great either, because Europeans don't seem to have taken off on the work I do here.'

Cox is undoubtedly a humane neocolonialist when it comes to business. That, presumably, is why his studio isn't doing all that well. Nevertheless, anyone who exalts his 'art' above someone else's 'craft' is implying superiority, and that's what cultural imperialism is all about.

Tuned into India



NO FULL STOPS IN INDIA

by MARK TULLY Viking India Pages: 336; Price: Rs 250

By TARUN J. TEJPAL

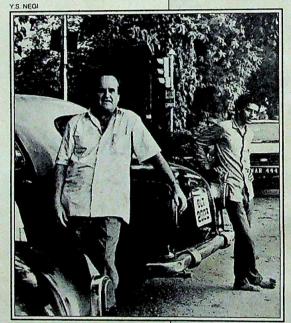
HE cliche is: India absorbs. And it appears to have been at its assimilative best in embracing Mark Tully. Nor is the noted BBC correspondent an unwilling partner in this clinch. In fact, if anything, Tully's response is the full-blooded one of the Punjabi peasant who cleaves to his torso

whoever wins his affection. No Full Stops is the attempt of an Indialover-and 'liver': few are both-to understand the complexities of an ancient civilisation, which defies facile classifications, and in which deep roots of order underlie the surface shrubbery of chaos.

Tully has a quarrel to pick with the flag-bearers of westernisation and progress who would render India into materialism, individualism and an aseptic secularism. In his opinion this will undermine India's creative genius, and destroy the crucial support systems of the majority of Indians, that is the poor and the deprived. Tully's brief is unfash-

ionable, but he illustrates it with the zeal of the convert. He narrates 10 unrelated stories to underscore the vitality of the 'real' India, while debunking the elite who operate out of narrow concerns and a shallow understanding. The best stories are the unknown ones, those that examine the heroic content of ostensibly mean lives like those of Ram Chander and Jangarh Singh. His thesis, subtle in these stories, becomes more overt and jarring in the well-known ones-Deorala sati, Kumbh Mela. Yet it remains interesting; and as he plumps for the Kumbh Mela you begin to sympathise with his view which should have been yours to start with.

This is not the book of a professional writer, of a Naipaul dissecting with a glinting scalpel. The prose has a comfortable, colloquial flow, in character with the author's calling. But Tully's heart is in the right place; and the nectar he has gathered in his 25 years in India makes for a honey refreshing to the palate.



Mark Tully: plumbing Indian depths

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(Directed by Michael Hoffman. Starring: Sally Field. Kevin Kline, Whoopi Goldberg). The fun starts when the real life of the stars of soap

opera The Sun Also eili, sigis Sets, played by Field and Kline. begins to take over their reel lives. Many contrived comical situations later, it ends with a bucketful of tears and awards for everyone. The stars, es-

Goldberg, pecially wasted in this spoof on television soap opera.

F/X 2 (Directed by Richard Franklin. Starring: Bryan Brown and Brian Dennehy). Ronnie Tyler is back with his special effects wizardry again. As are double-crossing policemen and magical movie tricks. Lacks the breathtaking novelty of the first, but still thrills.

HE SAID, SHE SAID (Directed by Marisa Silver and Ken Kwapis. Starring: Elizabeth Perkins and Kevin Bacon). The story of the on-offon relationship of a couple who co-host a television show. The film, similar to When Harry Met Sally, looks at the quirks of a manwoman relationship. A little like an earlier Perkins starrer, About Last Night Bacon and Perkins make a good meal. Lots of laughs and a predictable ending.



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KUDRAT KA (Directed by Tulsi and Shyam Ramsay: Starring: Hemant Birje, Deepak Parashar, Anil Dhawan, Baby Sweta). Horror goes oft, and snowy. This time the Ramsays give a yeti, who likes kids but not baddie adults. Avoidable.

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SCULPTURES IN MARBLE (Jehangir Art Gallery, Bombay: October 22 to 28). From an abstract and

adventurous style which used terrawood cotta. and metal a decade ago. G.L. Naravan has shifted to quasi-symbolic images in marble. Done in Italian marble, Narayan's pieces are inspired by human situations and inevitabilities.



PAINTINGS BY AMITAVA DAS (Art Heritage, New Delhi; October 16 to 29). More subconscious meanderings. essentially in the form of squiggles. There are echoes of Rabindranath Tagore, who appears to be influencing the work of more and more painters these days.

THROUGH AN ARCHITECT'S EYE: Photographic display of towns and citadels of Rajasthan (National Centre for the Performing Arts, Bombay; October 15 to 30), From the



golden sands of Jaisalmer to the shimmering pools of Udaipur, the grandeur and romance of Raiasthan's architecture come alive in renowned architect Uttam Jain's photographs, It is a labour of love over three decades, and whether it is an image of a profusely carved haveli or a crumbling bastion, the photographer's knowledge of structures and long association with the region introduces both drama and depth in the photographs. Some photographs have appeared on the covers of prestigious interna-

tional journals like the Architectural Review, while Jain's work has also been part of the Vistara show on Indian architecture in the Soviet Union, Japan and now Germany.

ooks

SKINNY LEGS AND ALL by Tom Robbins (Bantam Books; Price Rs 120). Another wacky surprise from the Seattle-based cult writer. More than a whiff of the crazy '60s in this novel about art, love, war, the Middle East, the earth, the cosmos. Centred at a New York restaurant run by a lew and an Arab—the UN's dream combination—it features a spoon, can of beans and a dirty sock among equally entertaining human protagonists. Marvellous read, especially for those who have a taste for the pop psychedelic.

RAISA GORBACHEV: I HOPE (Harper Collins: Rs 195). This is the season for Soviet autobiographies. First there was Yeltsin, now there's Raisa, and tomorrow there will be Mikhail. The glamorous Soviet first lady reminisces about her husband. their romance, and policies that were to change the world.

heatre

DAL (Directed by Raijnder Nath: New Delhi), Interesting attempt by Girish Karnad to weave two Kannada folk tales into a play. It revolves round Rani, played by Averee Chaurey, who is forced to live with half-truths. Her anguish is palpable. Also commendable is Veena Mehta who plays a blind woman. Lovleen Mishra is wasted.

BEGUM BARWE (Written and directed by Satish Alekar; Ravindra Natva Mandir, Bombay. Cast: Dr Mohan Agashe, Chandrakant Kale, Satish Alekar). Centred around a transvestite trapped in a man's body but with the child-bearing desires of a woman, this twoact Marathi play is about a dream-a man wanting to be a woman-that becomes a nightmare. Powerful performances and taut direction ensure memorable theatre.

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STREET (Dire Straits: MIL; Rs 45). First studio album in six years from the legendary



group. Brings back quirky, Celtic-tinged, intimate rock that is Mark Knopfler's signature. The brilliant new album will put the megaband on a £30-million, 28-nation, two-year, global tour, perhaps the most ambitious in rock history.



Vijaya Dixit: shutter-bug's helping hand



The 8-ft dosa: sumptuous food for thought

Diplomatic Roll

• Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan, Mani Dixit, has an onerous job considering Indo-Pak relations. Now he is getting diplomatic help from his wife. Vijaya Dixit. Her role-or rather rolls-seems to be more appealing. Last fortnight she held a photographic exhibition titled 'Wanderings' in Islamabad. The focus: improving bilateral relations. Says the shutter-bug: "It's a spontaneous view of Pakistan as I see it." From the response, it's a sure way of strengthening ties.

Return to Celluloid

• The most nail-biting cliff-hanger ever is almost over. The gamine-faced Guddi, Java Bachchan, is considering a comeback. But in the avatar of an older woman. She'll be acting in the screen version of Ashok Patole's drama Baa Retire Thaiye Chee (Mother is about to retire). Pulling her in the celluloid direction is telestar Shafi Inamdar, Says Java: "I have seen the play, and asked Shafi Inamdar to do a script to show me. If I like it, I'll do it." Beats politics hollow as Amitabh will testify.

Script Success

 Where do good villains go after hanging up their guns? They grab a pen. That's what Danny Denzongpa has done. The Bollywood baddle's penned the plot for the Nepalese film Saino. He must've done a good job, for the film's had its silver jubilee. It's already made in Hindi and Bengali. Clearly, a lot's going on behind the scenes.



Jaya Bachchan: a cliff-hanger ends, happily



The Rolls Royce Silver Spirit: record rolled back

King Cuisine

 If you like extra masala in your dosas, this one's for you. Created by an Ahmedabad restaurant, the Sankalp Dosa measures 8 ft. But this king-sized crisp tickles the wallet as much as the palate. It costs an extra large Rs 201. Made on a unique tawa by three cooks, the dosa is wheeled out on a trolley and eight to 10 people, seated on opposite sides of a bench, eat it together. But restaurant owner Kailash Goenka is ambitious: "Now I am trying for a 16 ft one, for Rs 1,000. That's food for thought.

Money Spinner

 It is one of a kind. Well. almost. Actually, the Rolls Royce Silver Spirit (1982 model) is one of only four such cars in the country. Last fortnight the STC-auctioned car had financial being wheels spinning, snapped up for a stupendous Rs 53,21,111. Officially, it's one of the most expensive cars sold in the country. The sleekly designed Rolls was bought by L.S. Bagla, the cardealer who had bought the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cadillac for Rs 31 lakh. Roll over. Cadillacs. The Rolls is back.

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